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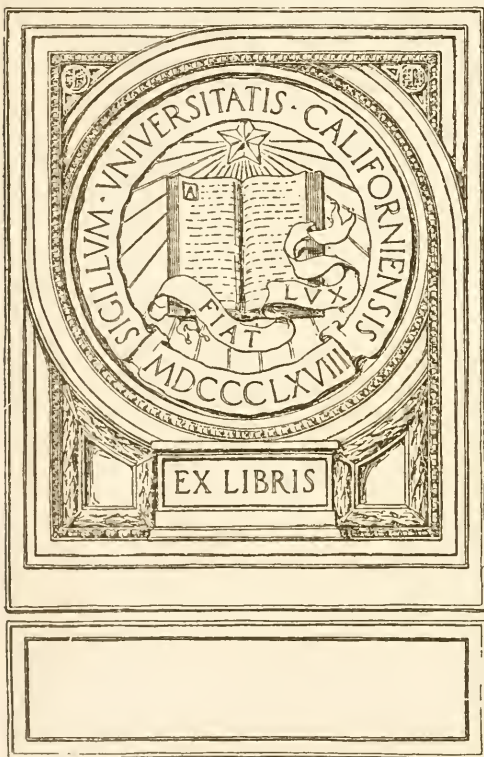
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JACK BRAG.

VOL. III.

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JACK BRAG.

BY THE AUTHOR OF

“SAYINGS AND DOINGS,”—“MAXWELL,” &c.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. III.

LONDON:
RICHARD BENTLEY,
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1837.

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JACK BRAG.

CHAPTER I.

WHEN Jack rose from his bed — in which, thanks to the mumbo-jum of Sir Stumpy Dubs, he had slept soundly—his “head ached consumedly,” as Farquhar says, and not only his head but his limbs; for the potent potion which had been administered to him during the evening by his patrician friend, produced in all the joints of the patient that sense of dislocation, of which the reader has previously been apprised, a recovery from which was generally the work of two or three days.

Jack looked out of the window of his room: the sun shone bright in a cloudless sky, and the sea sparkled and glittered in the breeze. Its surface was dotted with small boats hover-

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ing near the shore, on the horizon, larger vessels were gliding up channel, laden with the produce of other climes. Around him the flowers of the hotel's small garden threw their fragrance, and the birds made the air ring with their melody; but Jack gazed and saw not, listened, and heard not. The events of the preceding afternoon and night were all that he could think of;—the marriage of his mother—the exposure of himself—the subsequent loss of his money—He went to the table upon which he had left his pocket-book, counted the remaining notes which it contained, in order to satisfy himself, most unsatisfactorily, that the defeat he had sustained was real, and not

“The baseless fabric of a vision.”

The evidence was too clear to leave a doubt upon his mind; Jack, however, still consoled himself for the loss, by setting it down as a compromise with the colonel for the maintenance of secrecy with regard to the domestic disclosures to which he had been made a party.

Jack indeed had a confused recollection of having enjoined the colonel to the observance of this negative kind of obligation; but none of the circumstances of the past night were very clearly defined in his memory, which had occurred after their return from the library; the general impression upon his mind was, that *ecarté* was a very different game from what it had appeared to be to him when he had last played at it; and there did rest a very powerful conviction in what might be called his memory, that the colonel certainly had had prodigious luck in regard to turning up kings, or holding them, which, except at certain points of the game, everybody knows, is much the same thing: never mind, thought Jack, he cannot in justice to himself admit that he continued to associate and play cards with me till two in the morning if the disclosures which he had heard before ten were in any way derogatory to my character; so, said Jack, rubbing up his hair, "it's as broad as it's long,—six one way, and half-a-dozen the other; so there's no mistake."

But then, putting it thus, as regarded the past, to what had Jack to look forward for the future,—the “immediate future,” if that expression may be permitted. *There he was* still ; domesticated in the house with his detestable father-in-law, whose odious and most unsuitable attentions to his mother seemed likely to fix him as her inseparable companion during their stay. Jack, was most anxious for some “family” conversation, when there were no indifferent auditors of the party. Then came the embarrassment over his mind as to where the people of the house would lay breakfast, —and for how many ; whether, in consequence of the unlooked-for association of the previous evening, they would establish a sort of joint-stock tea-and-coffee-company, including the colonel and himself amongst the share-holders, and spread out a table for them all, or find a separate room for Mr. and Mrs. Salmon.

Then how was he to act with regard to the rest of the day ? His mother had made a great exertion, for *her*, to run down and see him ; and

although "before company," her disclosures of private matters was in the highest degree disagreeable, he could not leave her; indeed, self-interest contributed to induce his stay where he was, until he had ascertained from herself how she considered him to stand with regard to the business, which Jack began to remember, somewhat, as it should seem too late, was left by his father entirely at *her* command, and under her control, in consideration of his having paid large sums for his favourite son during his life-time, and having left him extremely well off at his death; and these considerations were floating in his mind, and his brain, which being very much damaged by the last night's revelry, were scarcely competent to their arrangement.

It was while he was pondering these, to him, important matters, that he rang his bell to summon the chambermaid, in order to repeat, as usual, his enquiries after his servant and phaeton, &c. &c. "No Monsieur Tonson lived there."—None of his suite had arrived, and his

clothes were again consigned to the rubbing of the lout who officiated in the capacity of "boots."

When this essential officer returned with Jack's "things," he enquired of *him*, as being the first authority, if not in rank, at least in priority of appearance, whether colonel Stiffkey was up, and received an answer that sounded sweeter to his ears than the music of the spheres. The colonel had been up and gone two hours at least — he had ordered horses to his britzska, and had proceeded to Hastings.

"For this relief much thanks," breathed Jack, not in these words, for he perhaps, had never heard them, but in his own pet phrase which I have before noticed, "What an appy release." It was, indeed, the removal of a mountain's weight of care and anxiety from his mind; and he was even the more pleased with it, as it seemed to him a sort of attention on the part of his aristocratic friend, that he should leave the only disengaged sitting-room

in the hotel for the special occupation of *his* family. Whatever the combination of feelings by which he was actuated might have been, he certainly felt a great deal more at his ease than he was when he rose.

While he was dressing, Jack, who though perfectly qualified to ride a winning horse, and although brisk and lively while things went smoothly, was, when a reverse of fortune came, for a short time, and until a fresh change for the better arrived, "right down, and no mistake," — was, as he would have said, "regularly floored." It was true the colonel had relieved him from the embarrassment of his society; but it was also true that his mother had formed a connexion which was *not* to be gotten rid of; a connexion which, besides its unsuitableness and the degradation it entailed upon *her*, and necessarily upon *him*, might, and perhaps would, most seriously interfere with his ulterior financial arrangements. If, as it was but too clearly the case, the young shopman

had married his old mistress for the sake of what he could get, there could be little or no doubt that he had contrived to secure to himself the power over the premises, stock, and good-will of the business, which his father had exclusively bequeathed to *her* without either bar or limitation.

The question then with Jack during the operation of shaving, was, whether to ride the high horse, treat Mr. Salmon *de haut en bas*, and talk largely and loudly to his mother, or to do what many greater men than *he*, have done upon similar occasions, make the best of a bad bargain, and conciliate all parties by endeavouring to "put up" his youthful father-in-law, instead of running him down, and so obtain by fair means and honeyed words, that which, he apprehended, he might not so certainly secure by violence or bluster.

It was quite clear from his mother's manner, that she was determined not only to stand up "for her dear J. S." but to justify the course of proceeding she herself had adopted; for long before Jack had retired in disgust, in

the evening, the old gentlewoman's conversation had assumed a very equivocal tone and character—it professed to be extremely good-natured, and even playful, but Jack's long-felt neglect, and the events of the bridge lay smouldering in her mind ready to blaze up on the first breeze that might spring up in the family. Jack was alive to all this, and so, after a debate with himself of some half hour, he determined upon doing the amiable, apologizing for the warmth of the anger he had expressed at Salmon's impudent imitation of him, and of adopting a system of conciliation, which, however unsuccessful in the great world of politics, might prove excellent policy in a tallow-chandler's shop.

Jack, having dressed himself, dressed his face in smiles, and, resolved to be gay and think no more of his defeats, or indeed of any of the numerous unpleasant incidents of the last few days, skipped down stairs to the sitting-room, where he found breakfast all prepared.

On the table lay a note, addressed “ ———

Brag, Esq." the writing was unknown to him, but without long poring over it, in order to ascertain the author, — which by opening it at once, he was certain to know — he broke the seal and read.

“DEAR SIR,

“I passed so bad a night, and suffered so much from head-ache in the morning, that I resolved upon trying what a drive to Hastings would do for me. I have therefore to offer my apologies for not making one of your party at breakfast. I shall return to the hotel to dinner, and bring with me my friend Gunnersbury, whom, as you know, I expected here, and hope to catch him on the road to Hastings. Yours, faithfully,

“HERBERT STIFFKEY.”

“There goes again,” said Jack, “civil note enough, and, as I said before, deuced glad he is gone; but the rest of the letter is no go whatever — coming back to dinner, and with that infernal Gunnersbury — all charged

and loaded with Dover news; the moment he hears my name, which the colonel in course will mention to him, out it will all come. We must manage something—cut and run before *that*. If all goes smooth in the domestic line, I shall do—go along easy—straight up, right down, and no mistake.—Waiter, where is the lady—Mrs. Salmon—and Mr. Salmon?

“The lady is gone to bathe, sir,” said the waiter, “and the gentleman is walking up and down in front of the garden.”

“He is, is he?” said Jack; “look sharp and be ready to send in breakfast when we come back. I’ll go join him—I say, slavey, get plenty of fish—eggs—ham—eh?—coffee—tea—eh? and all the etceteras, and no mistake?”

“You got the note, sir?” said the waiter enquiringly.

“All right,” said Jack; and out he marched to join his horror, J. S. When he got within a few yards of him, he hailed him with a “Good morning!” just to try the

temper of his mind, as a captain fires a gun to bring a strange sail to.

“ Good morning ! sir,” said Salmon coldly, touching his hat.

“ Salmon,” said Jack, “ give us your hand ; don’t be ill-natured. I ’m deuced sorry for having flown in that stupid passion last night. I meant nothing, only my blood was up, and no man likes to be mimicked. I spoke sharply ; the colonel was there ; and — however, I tell you I am deuced sorry, more particularly, you know, considering how we are connected ; so let us be friends.”

“ Well, John,” said Salmon, in a patronizing tone, “ I ’m deuced glad to hear this. Titsy and I had a long talk over about last night, and I didn’t think I should have got her even to stop to breakfast this morning ; however, now, she ’ll be as pleased as I am : I wants no quarrelling I ’m sure ; what *is*, is always for the best. The business was all going at sixes and sevens, and she all day fretting and fussing — just miserable : and I ’m certain we shall do very well. She is, a few years older than

me ; but I shall be as old as *she* some day, if I live long enough ; so it's all one in the end."

The conclusiveness of Mr. Salmon's reasoning was not quite evident to his son-in-law, whose real hatred of him seemed to increase in proportion to the civility he felt it politic to bestow upon him.

" I 'm sure I 'm glad to shake hands," added Salmon, suiting the action to the " word, and have everything go easy ; — and now, if you 'll give me leave, I 'll go down towards the bathing machines, where Titsy has been washing herself, and walk up with her ; we two by ourselves ; in which case I can tell her what has passed between us now, so that she may come up to you all right and ready to be pleased and goodnatured, and so have no squabbling or bother about what's past."

" Do, do," said Jack — " there's a good fellow ! — and I 'll go into the house, and get all things snug and tidy."

They separated, each to fulfil his intentions — Salmon well pleased with the course Jack

seemed to have adopted, and Jack satisfied at having soothed the “animal” into the belief that he was sincere in his amicable professions. How long the game could be played, or whether Jack could play it better than he played *ecarté*, remains yet to be seen. It is easy to wear smiles, and look smoothly for a short time; but to continue seeming to love that, which one hates, or respect that which we despise, is a most arduous undertaking: — as Tillotson says—“It is hard to act a part long; for where truth is not at the bottom, nature will always be endeavouring to return, and will peep out and betray itself at one time or other.”

By the time Jack had made his arrangements, he beheld the affectionate J. S. and his dear Titsy advancing arm-in-arm from the shore towards the garden-gate of the hotel; and although he had made up his mind to “peace and concord,” there was something so excessively ridiculous in the appearance of his mother so associated with Jem Salmon, — connected too, as they both were in his mind, with

the absurdity of the nicknames which they had endearingly conferred upon each other, that he — *he*, the object of ridicule in every society with which he mixed, could scarcely restrain a burst of laughter as he watched their progress homeward, marked as it was by numerous little flirting attentions on the part of J. S. and the playful acceptance of them by Titsy. Jack's disposition to mirth, however, was checked by regret that if she had chosen to follow his advice and marry, she had not united herself to somebody who might have seemed to the world, to have married her for something besides her money. J. S. he could not consider in any other light than that of a fortune-hunter; and so blind is vanity, or rather, it should be said, so blind is human nature even without vanity, that although his own object for the last four years had been an alliance with a rich wife — he shrank with disgust from a man who had acted precisely upon the same principle, and who only differed from *him* in his pursuit by having succeeded in it. To be sure,

Jack had the presumption to look for youth and beauty into the bargain, neither of which certainly had fallen to the lot of Mr. Salmon. However, *chacun à son goût*, J. S. had “eyes, and chose her” as being perhaps, in the words of Butler,

———— fitter for his turn,
(For fat is wondrous apt to burn;)
Who at his flames would soon take fire,
Relent and melt to his desire,
And, like a candle in the socket,
Dissolve her graces int’ his pocket.

The quotation is somewhat apt, but smelling so dreadfully of the shop, that even if Jack had ever heard of Hudibras, he would not have thought of using it.

“Johnny, my dear,” said Mrs. Salmon, as they entered the house, “now you *are* my son. J. S. has told me all; and we shall live snug and comfortable, and happy. It’s never no use raking up old grievances, as I always says, — so give me a kiss, and let us be friends.”

Jack did as he was desired, and was bussed accordingly.

“ I ’m quite refreshed by the washing,” said the lady. “ The old woman had the deuce and all to do to hold me when the great wave came all over me: I feel it singing in my ears now.”

“ Rely upon it,” said Jack, “ it ’s uncommon healthy.”

“ I want J. S. to have a dip before we go,” said Mrs. Salmon, “ but he says he ’s afraid of the cold. Eh! —where ’s your friend the colonel?—doesn’t he breakfast with us?”

“ No,” said Jack, “ he wrote a note to say he was afraid of intruding upon us, and so has gone over to Hastings.”

“ Well then now, John,” said Mrs. Salmon, “ after breakfast you must show us all the sights—that is, if there are any ; and we must go to the library, and go down to the shore and see if we can pick up shells, — Kitty, poor girl, was always a bit of a cocklologist — and so make a day of it ; for we *must* be off to-morrow morning.”

Yes, thought Jack, and a little sooner than *that*, I promise you.

At this moment commenced the “ *civil*” war

in the family, which was not destined to cease and determine much before midnight. Jack had to conceal his unconquerable detestation of Salmon for twelve or fourteen hours, for the sake of securing the influence which it was but too clear he had obtained over his mother, for the purpose of carrying the point now become doubly important, of obtaining a financial supply from home.

Salmon, who was by no means deficient in cunning, was perfectly aware of the hollowness of the treaty of peace into which his son-in-law and senior had volunteered to enter. The violence of Jack's manner, and the strength of the language which he had used the night before, in the presence of the colonel, and his subsequent retirement, accompanied by that gentleman, until he and his bride had gone to rest, were all convincing evidences of the real feeling which the little man entertained towards him. Nor were his suspicions of the character of his present conduct in any degree weakened by the fact that Mrs. Salmon had communicated

to him the contents of Jack's letter from Deal, which concluded with a gentle hint as to the want of funds. These things Mr. Salmon put together in *his* little mind; so that never did Angelo and St. George equip themselves with masque and foil with a more sincere determination of showing their skill and dexterity, than did these two small creatures after *their* kind.

The odds, however, were two to one against Jack in this game of finesse, inasmuch as while he was fencing with his direct opponent, he had also to keep his mother in perfect good humour: he was to be affectionate, dutiful, and attentive to *her*; gratify all her inclinations of seeing and being seen, show her all about the place, and, above all, get her away from it, voluntarily, before the return of Stiffkey and his hateful companion. It was in truth, as dear Sandy says, a difficult game, but Jack always felt himself invincible where women were to be won, or men to be managed; nor, strange to say, did the frequently-repeated failures

which he experienced in both pursuits either damp his ardour, or render him suspicious of his qualifications for one and the other.

Jack's first object of course now, was, to soothe his two guests; then, if he could, to get his mother alone, try her, on the subject of his own relative position as regarded the shop; and then on the most immediately interesting topic of all, ready money — then to get Salmon into council, already prepossessed by the kindness and civility he had shown him, and which he proposed to observe towards him during the morning, and so, having kept them within doors until the few visitors at the place should have separated in pursuit of their different amusements, then to take them to see all the things which were to be seen, which unless friendship, and affection provide them, are not numerous, and then subsequently, by some stratagem yet undesigned, get them away altogether before sunset.

“The fish,” said Salmon, “is uncommon

good here—so fresh coming right out of the sea.”

“Oh! all correct,” said Jack. “I take care to have a fellow ready to grab them the moment they are caught. Nice place, a’n’t it, mother?”

“Why, Jack,” said the lady, “I can’t say I have seen much of it yet.”

“There isn’t much more to look at,” said Brag, “than you see out of one of these windows; it only reaches just beyond that row of houses; however, we’ll go out and have a toddle, as soon as the fashionable time arrives, and no mistake.”

“Yes,” said Salmon, “one may as well be out of the world, as out of the fashion—eh? Titsy—twig?”

“You are quite right, J. S.” said the lady; “and upon my word, now I look at you, I *do* think you seem better for your little trip, already.”

“I’m sure of one thing,” said Jack, who most certainly did not care if his newly ac-

quired relation was at the bottom of the sea ;
“ a warm bath would do him a world of good.”

“ So I think,” said Mrs. Salmon.

“ I shouldn’t mind,” said Jem, “ but it seems so strange ; I — never *was* in a bath, and — eh ? — twig ?”

“ — That makes no difference,” said Jack ;
“ there’s no great art in jumping into a tub of hot water. Let me ring the bell, and order one for you in an hour or so ?”

“ Do J. S., there’s a dear,” said Mrs. Salmon.

“ Well, anything to make myself agreeable,” said the half-relenting tallow-chandler.

Up jumped Jack, to ring the bell, and in less than five minutes the enquiries whether a bath could be had, were made, the affirmative answer given, and the whole thing arranged to be ready at twelve o’clock.

As for the particular hour at which Salmon was to be pickled, or the peculiar advantages derivable to his health or comfort, from the operation, *they* formed no part of Jack’s

anxiety or even consideration ; anything else that would have kept his father-in-law away from his mother for half an' hour or so, would have been seized by our hero with equal avidity : and however ready the said father-in-law might be to oblige " Titsy," he was quite cunning enough to be sure that Jack's civility was the effect of some hidden cause. The difference between the sharpness and indignation of the previous evening, and the solicitude and civility of the morning, was too glaring to deceive even J. S. but as *he* had his own game to play, and as his temporary absence from his bride would, as he fancied, forward his schemes, he readily acceded to the proposition and seemed quite delighted with Jack's suggestion, that he and his mother should accompany him to the bath and walk about, until he had finished his ablutions.

It was a rare treat to see these two worthies at work, either spinning a web to catch the other ; all, however, was smiles and good humour, jest and jollity, and to look at the

superficial inches of their countenances a man would not have imagined that anything was going on under the surface but that which was really apparent.

“ Well,” said Mrs. Salmon, “ thank Bogie I have made a capital breakfast, — two whittings — a plate of shrimps — two eggs — three slices of ham — three rounds of toast, and one of bread and marmalade — one cup of coffee, and two of tea — shan’t be bad, Jim — this dipping does give one a sharpish appetite.”

“ Better than dipping in the tallow, Titsy ?” said Salmon, — “ twig ?”

“ True ! my dear,” said Titsy, “ but always recollect — as I used to say to John, if it wasn’t for *that*, we should not have a dip *here*. Keep the shop and the shop will keep you. I know Johnny, you don’t like talking of it, but I am sure, even now, if you were to turn to, and be steady, we might still increase our connexion and do capitally.”

“ And I am sure, my dear mother,” said Jack ; “ I would do anything in *my* power — you have only to point out what ; I’m your

man — all I want is, to see you and James happy and comfortable.”

“ Hem !” said Jem, who could not stifle a sort of cough, which sounded awfully artificial.

“ In the way of travelling, now,” said Mrs. Salmon ; “ you who go about so much — if you would only just circulate a few of our cards, or even speak to your friends.”

“ Oh !” said Salmon, “ don’t worry Mr. Brag, Titsy ; he don’t like business, — *I* do. I’m sure whatever we can do to make things agreeable to him, *we* shall : I dare say we shall have enough, and a little to spare, — eh ? — twig ? ”

“ Bravo ! Jim,” said Brag ; “ you are a capital fellow, straight up, right down, and no mistake ; give us your hand — I see we shall all pull together.”

“ I hope so, dear John,” said Mrs. Salmon, whose happiness at being freed for a few hours from the trammels of business was made complete by witnessing the cordiality which existed between her two companions, of the main-

tenance of which, the scene of the preceding evening had rendered her extremely suspicious.

“Come, shall we have a walk?” said Salmon; “we may as well be jogging towards this bath, eh? — twig?”

“To be sure,” said Jack; “I’m ready for anything you like, all one to me — nice as nip; — come, mother — on with your things — let’s be alive!”

“Jump about, Titsy,” said Mr. Salmon.

“Oh! you rogue,” said his lady, feigning playfully to smack his face, and wheeling out of the door-way (which was rather too small for her pirouette,) in order to get herself ready.

“Fine old girl!” said Jack, “that I must say.”

“About the best-natured soul as ever trod shoe-leather,” said Salmon; “rely upon it, Mr. John, we shall be very happy with each other. I’m so used to her ways—and she has known me so long — twig?”

“Well,” said Jack, “you have *my* good wishes, and no mistake.”

This dialogue, which was extended a little farther with similar protestations of mutual good-will, was at length broken in upon by the return of the lady, with whom the two beaux proceeded to walk to Miss West's baths, one of them on either side of her. The conversation by the way, was of the common-place order. James Salmon expressed as much delight at seeing a plough at work in a field, as Pepys experienced at beholding a flock of sheep on Epsom Downs, to him "the most innocent sight he ever beheld;" all the surrounding objects, whether marine or agricultural, were to Salmon matters of surprise and interest, the sphere of his previous travels never having been extended beyond the range of hills which environ the metropolis, and to which he had been in the habit of looking from a distance, as to the boundaries of the civilized world.

When they reached the baths, Salmon was a little startled, and his wife somewhat shocked, at finding that he was to be consigned to the care of two virgin sisters. Had Mr. Salmon visited that romantic watering-place Aberyst-

wyth some twenty years since, he would have been more startled still ; for at that period not only did a fair female prepare the bath for the male visiter, but after he had nearly concluded his ablutions, pop her head into the room, and with the most perfect business-like gravity, and all the purity of Cambrian innocence, ask “ would hur like to be rub-bed ? ”

The moment the doors of the classical building which now contained Jack’s father-in-law were closed, Jack began to draw the dialogue between himself and his parent towards the desired point. His mother unconsciously fell into the snare, and after a few remarks upon second marriages, made hypothetically by Brag, she asked him whether she had not greatly surprised him by what she had done.

“ Why, yes,” said Jack, “ I didn’t expect it ; but I don’t think you could have done better.”

“ Nor I,” said Mrs. Salmon. “ As for marrying again, recollect you pressed it upon me ; and it was lonesome for me in the house by myself

where I had been so long used to a family; all my neighbours too were dropping off, one way or other: — the Jenningses, at the corner, have retired from business, and taken a house near Guilford; Martin, the cutler, is gone to live at Brighton; Old South is dead, and his daughter married: and so what you said about my getting a second husband laid hold on me, and then I certainly did put that advertisement into the paper; and then you answered it,—and—”

“Not I, upon my life!” said Jack; “no,—the trick wasn’t mine.”

“Well, never mind *now*, who did it,” said Mrs. Salmon; “it was done;—and I was exposed, and by *you*, John. I don’t believe you meant it. However, I was in a passion, my blood was up, and when I went home I couldn’t bear myself, I was so vexed; and Jim, who was at home, was so civil, and so attentive, and all that, that I told him how I had been treated; and I did so for another reason,—to see how he looked,—for I thought, as I told you at the time, that he had found out

what I had done, and had told *you*; and so, when I saw he knew nothing of it, I felt easier; and then we talked it over, and so I asked him to sup with me after shutting up; and he did; and then, from what he said, I saw I needn't go husband-hunting any more; and then recollecting how clever he was in the trade, and all that, and thinking, as I wasn't over-young myself, I had best marry a man who wouldn't grow old in a hurry, why, I made up my mind; and before twelve o'clock that very night the affair was settled."

"Despatch is the soul of business," said Jack, "and no mistake."

"So you see," continued Mrs. Salmon, "there's nobody to blame but yourself,—if blame there is; but I see none. That poor unfortunate creature, Kitty, is gone, and I have nobody to look to but you; and you may rely upon it, Jack, if there should be any little additions to the family, it shan't be no disparagement to my eldest."

Jack thanked his mother most earnestly for her kind consideration.

“ I had a long letter from Brown,” said Mrs. Salmon, “ which I meant to have brought down to show you : he writes very reasonable, and tells me how his agent had run away, and his letters had not been properly delivered, or we should have known of Kitty’s death in due course : he don’t write in no ways reproachful ; doesn’t explain all about it quite so clear as I could have wished ; and talks of dropping a veil over her indiscretion, which, I suppose, is some Indy fashion ; but he does not mention *your* name,—neither good nor bad.”

“ Don’t like me,” said Jack, “ not one of *his* sort. It wouldn’t have been so bad a spec after all, if I had married Nance, as things have turned out ; but who could have fancied *that*,—eh ? Had the whole story out at Hastings. Never mind — what ’s done can’t be undone, and what was left undone *then*, can’t be done *now* ; so we must make the best of it, and no mistake. Now, as to the future, how do I stand in the money line ?”

“ Why, that you must talk to Jemes about,” said the old lady, “ he has got the key of the

till. I have given him up everything, just as your poor dear father left it to *me*; and you'll find him, if you treat him—as I am glad to see you are doing to-day — well and kindly, a very liberal young chap. I was afraid last night——”

“Last night, my dear mother,” said Jack, “I did not know half so much of him as I know now; and, besides, before company, I didn't like——”

“No,” interrupted Mrs. Salmon, “that's it, Johnny; you are as proud as a pig with two tails; and that's what I blame you for, or rather, perhaps, your poor dear father is most to blame after all, for cocking you up upon stilts in his life-time. Never mind that now; you'll find, as Jemes has told you, that everything will go smooth and comfortable for the future.”

“But, mother,” said Jack,—“I don't mean to say a word against what you have done,—only don't you think,—I am sure I have the greatest reliance upon Jim,—but don't you think you should have kept some better hold over the concern and over him, for your own sake?”

“My dear John,” said Mrs. Salmon, “in what I have done, I have been all governed by what you have said : you have told me over and over again, that nothing would induce you to take to the business,—I couldn’t suffer it to go to ruin ; and as for securing any thing for *you*, you told me in the very last letter I ever got from you, except the one from Deal the other day, that you were going to marry a widow with I don’t know how many thousands a year ; — that very Mrs. Dallington, I suppose, who kicked——”

“—— I know, my dear mother,” said Jack ; “that’s all a fib. Never mind, I’ll settle that Mrs. Cropper when I go back to town ; she shall hop the twig—and no mistake.”

“Well, but hear me, John,” continued the matron ; “whether the lady turned you off, or you turn off the housekeeper, is nothing to the business. You did not marry the widow,—which you told me was a settled thing.”

“True, mother,” said Jack ; “but you wouldn’t, surely, have had me take up with—a

—mum,—you understand?—not all right,—eh?—screw loose, and no mistake.”

“ But, Mrs. Cropper——?”

“ Never mind Mrs. C.,” said Jack ; “ the housekeeper’s room is not the place to get the secrets of such a family as *that*, out of. Leave *me* alone,—I ’ll do yet.”

“ Well, then, that ’s all as it should be,” said his mother.

“ What I want is something just at present,” said Jack.

“ I told Jemes,” said Mrs. Salmon, “ that something ought to be done for you in *that* way ; and I ’m sure, by his manner, you won’t have anything to complain of. You had better speak to him yourself.”

“ Perhaps you might open the business,” said Jack, “ when he joins us. I will leave you for a little : we can meet at luncheon, in the hotel. I must just step to South, to call on a friend : take that opportunity of saying what you think,—you know I like to do it handsome, and no mistake, and—I can arrange

all, — repay any advance ; although the rents from those Fleet-market houses *do* come in, slow ; — and then we shall be as easy together as a leg in an old boot, — and no mistake neither.”

“ I love to hear you talk so reasonably, John,” said the old lady. “ I thought you would rail, and gibe, and jeer at me ; and as I said before, what happened last night didn’t go to make me the least easy ; however, now I am satisfied, and you shall be satisfied too, John.”

Saying which, she pressed his arm maternally, and Jack felt himself winking his off-eye in self-approbation of his admirable skill and manœuvring, which had been evinced not only in carrying, as he felt certain he had, everything he wished, from the great point of raising the supplies down to the contrivance of getting rid of his two unfashionable-looking companions during the hour or two before the time when, according to his previously-mentioned calculation, the good company would be scattered.

When Mr. Salmon came forth “ refreshed,”

Mrs. Salmon looked at him with an expression of countenance in which strangely mingled the satisfaction of a matron, and the approbation of a bride. As the reader has been already informed, Jim was not a bad-looking cockney, — he had plenty of hair on his head, encouraged in its growth, no doubt, by his professional pursuits: and a profusion of fawn-coloured whiskers, skirting his cheeks and fringing his chin; in which adornment, as Nature has not limited the advantages of curiosity to the aristocracy, the tallow-chandler's shop-boy was quite upon a par with the best tigers of the day, who, as Salmon himself would have said, “move in the upper circles at the West end.”

“Well, my dear J. S.” said his lady, “was it pleasant?”

“Wasn't it?” said Mr. Salmon. “I never felt nothing more agreeable in all my life, and now I'm all in a glow. I wish we could stop here two or three days longer, Titsy — twig?”

“Well,” said Jack to his mother, “then I

tell you what,—I'll go and make my call at South, and be back as soon as I can. I will order them to get luncheon at one, and after luncheon, the gay part of the day here, we'll make a tour,—good-b'ye!—and while I am gone, remember.—If you like walking—it's all open— all free— fine air— great deal of water, and sometimes a ship— eh?— it's what I call Liberty Hall, and no mistake."— And away he went to the place of his destination, first touching at the hotel; his ulterior point being another visit to the inns at South, upon his continued fruitless search after his servant, which, better than anything else, suited his purpose of getting away, for a short time, from J. S. and his bride.

When Jack was alone, as we have already seen before, he could not help "thinking," as well as feeling. All that his mother had said came seriously home to him; every untoward incident which had occurred in his own proper sphere, every movement that had been made in that, which was literally his own domestic

circle, had originated in his own vanity and vain-gloriousness. His mother had unconsciously set a mirror before him, in which he saw his own absurdities and emptiness; but such reflections were not likely long to affect him: the marriage, the exclusion from the business, his original loss of the exemplary Anne, his perpetual exposures in society, his final rejection by his noble friend, were all the results of the same unconquerable disposition for talking big; — and unconquerable it was, — it was, indeed, his “ruling passion.”

The reader will easily conceive what the conversation between Mr. and Mrs. Salmon turned upon, during their Paradisaical walk about the neighbourhood: she expressed to him her conviction that John was by no means displeased with the marriage; that he was not dissatisfied at any of the arrangements that had been made; that his prospects were good, his connexions excellent; that Mrs. Cropper’s story was all a fiction, that there was no relying upon housekeepers, — to which

last dictum Mr. Salmon did not, with special reference to Mrs. Cropper, appear entirely to agree,—and that, in fact, he would delight *her*, and nail the affectionate regards of John, by doing all he could to put him in funds.

Judge her delight when, instead of any difficulty or doubt expressed by J. S., she heard him declare his anxiety to do anything and everything *he* could, to accommodate him, and regret that he had gone off on his visit without something agreeable to him having been definitively arranged.

After this discussion, poor Mrs. Salmon felt her heart at rest: her natural affection for her son was strong, his follies were but foibles in *her* eyes; and although, when excited either by imaginary neglect or ridicule, or by anything hot, strong, and sweet, she could not resist the exhibition of her feelings, still she already repented that she had acted so hastily upon the impulse of the moment as to put Jack so entirely in the power of his young father-in-law, and was therefore the more

gratified by finding how liberally he was inclined to deal by him.

At luncheon they were to re-assemble, and circumstances had, as we know, conspired to promise that it should be a pleasant repast. The reader shall, therefore, have the re-union in a separate chapter.

CHAPTER II.

THE high contracting powers met according to appointment at the semi-demi-dinner, and it was very soon evident to Jack that his mother had, during his absence, exerted her influence over his juvenile father-in-law, and convinced him that he would find Jack most conformable to all his wishes in the family concerns if he would but show a reciprocal feeling of conciliation and friendliness: indeed, before the bottled porter had entirely vanished, and the drop of something warm, which Mrs. Salmon considered necessary after the dipping which she and J. S. had undergone, the one in the hot and the other in the cold water, had quite disappeared, it was no longer a matter of doubt that Jem would do everything in his power to accommodate our hero in any finan-

cial arrangements which he might propose. In order to have all this carried into effect, Mrs. Salmon accidentally — (on purpose) — left the room, giving the gentlemen an opportunity of talking over business.

Mr. Salmon having decided upon his course, and made up his mind as to the system which he intended to pursue, and not being afflicted with that commodity which sometimes most seriously interferes with the progress of worldly concernments, called diffidence, lost no time in doing what he called “coming to the point.”

“I say, John,” said Jem — (and the familiar mode of addressing him was poison to his ears) — “Titsy says you want some stumpy.”

“Why —” said Jack, interrupting him.

“Well now, keep steady,” said J. S; “whatever you want you shall have — twig?”

“Thank you,” said Jack.

“Only now, I tell you what,” said Salmon, “everybody, you know, wants money as well as *you*; — every one, you see, wants a lift. Now Titsy tells me you want fifty or a hundred pounds.”

“ Exactly, more or less as the case may be,” said Jack.

“ Well now, I tell you,” said Jem, to whose financial reasonings Jack, considering whence he had risen in the concern, of which he might and ought to have been the head, did not listen perhaps with as much urbanity as, under other circumstances, he might have observed,—“ suppose you take three hundred.”

“ As you please,” said Jack, mollified on the instant, and suddenly impressed with the wonderful liberality of the new head of the house.

“ I tell you how we can manage it,” said Salmon: “ Titsy tells me your rents will come in at Christmas; now I think we may as well act on the give and take principle — twig?”

“ Certainly,” said Jack — “ what’s right is right—all fair, and no mistake.”

“ Well then,” continued Jem, “ *you give me* your acceptance for five hundred pounds at two months; I’ll give you a cheque now for three hundred: you can draw on me for the balance when you want it; and when the bill is due we

can settle it all — only it would serve my turn to pay in your bill to my account.”

Jack, who was perfectly convinced that, accept what bill he might, his mother never would permit him to be persecuted on account of it, even if he failed to pay it, jumped at the proposal, although somewhat disgusted by the precautions taken by his juvenile father-in-law, and rather alarmed as to the prosperity of the business which sought to bolster up its character by a payment to *his* banker, of such a sum in such a shape. Salmon, however, increased his surprise by telling him that the house into which *his* bill would be paid was not that of their own regular banker, but one with whom *he* kept a separate account, and who was very liberal in the way of discounts.

Jack saw that if he refused the conditions, he should not get the money, and as he was anxious to have his account look respectable at *his* banker's, he determined to accede to the proposition; and, as in such matters nothing is like time present, they proceeded to purchase a stamp, in order to conclude the affair out of hand.

Out of this simple piece of business Jack contrived to carry a point, the management of which, had puzzled him all the morning. Upon enquiring at the library, there was not a stamp of sufficient value in the place to carry so large an acceptance;—"they would send that evening to Lewes, if that would do, and get the stamp by the next morning."

A ray of light burst in upon Jack, —a certain means of escaping from Eastbourne, and carrying off his near and dear relations, before the return of the dreaded dandies, instantaneously presented itself; — why not go to Lewes themselves, and let the returning travellers to London depart thence in the morning?—they would see another town; the various coaches from Lewes were better than the Eastbourne *one*; in short, it would be a trip, and a variety.

Mrs. Salmon, who was in an exceedingly good humour, and especially pleased with Jack, made no objection—Jim seemed for a moment to doubt: however, their project could not be completed without the stamp; for, although Mr. Salmon

had the highest confidence in his son-in-law, he did not exhibit the smallest disposition to give the cheque without first getting hold of the acceptance. These doubts, however, were speedily and suddenly terminated by his finding a playbill in the library, announcing that there would be a play and farce acted at the Lewes theatre that evening, by the particular desire of Lady somebody, one of the leading belles of that part of the county, and that it would be a very gay affair. Mr. James Salmon never having been much beyond the limits of the Bills of Mortality, and being of a remarkably theatrical turn, was delighted with the prospect of this amusement, far preferable, as he thought, to the monotonous roll and splash of the waves on the beach : therefore he decreed that thither they should go, there get their stamp, transact their business, have their dinner, see the play, get a bit of supper after it, and so be up and ready for a start to town in the morning.

“ Capital notion !” said Jack — “ nothing better : don’t you think so, mother ?”

“ Indeed I do, John,” said the old lady ; “ and

I have had so little of your company of late, that it's quite a treat to go with you anywhere."

"Let us lose no time then," said Brag — "we'll have a barouche — or sociable, if they have such a thing — that will hold us comfortably, and we'll have a regular afternoon and evening of it. I'll settle the bill; you are *my* visitors, and——"

"No, John, no," said his mother; "we didn't come down to see you for what we could get — so don't talk of that."

"Well, just as you please," said Brag. "What time shall I say? — half an hour — eh? — ought to get early to Lewes, and dine in time for the play. I'll say half an hour, and off we go, right up, straight down, and no mistake."

Saying which, Jack, glorying in the success of his scheme, and the fortunate turn of circumstances, which at once relieved him of all doubt and difficulty with regard to the conduct of the evening, proceeded to the hotel, ordered the carriage to be ready in time, directed the landlady to charge the horses to Salmon, and

left a message to be delivered to Colonel Stiffkey, that he should return to the hotel to sleep; having previously packed up his valise, containing his cap, comb, &c. and ordered it to be put in the carriage; giving directions that, if his servant and phaeton *should* arrive, they were to wait for him till his return; because if he should not be able to get back in time that evening, he should certainly be back to luncheon the next day. Thus his liberal offer of considering the Salmons as his guests was metamorphosed into *their* paying not only for their living, but for the horses which, for his own convenience, he had engaged for them; moreover embracing the dexterous contrivance of leaving Colonel Stiffkey to pay for the dinner of the day before, or, if not that, of leaving the landlady to put up with the loss of one half of the expenditure.

Punctual to the moment, the carriage with *four* horses, rendered necessary by the length of the stage, drove up to the door: the hurry and bustle of the moment, the sight of the equipage, the courtesy of the servants, and the general excitement, threw

Mr. Salmon off his guard, and he did not give himself time—indeed, Brag would not allow him any—to discuss the different items of the bill; but having, under his son-in-law's advice, left a sum sufficient to satisfy the attendants for both parties, he stepped into the open barouche, in which the seat of honour was reserved for him by the side of Titsy, Jack going with his back to the horses, looking as obsequious as an equerry. His excessive humility and politeness upon this occasion had two causes; in the first place, he felt that his mother and her boy-husband would be pleased with his civility; and, in the next, he thought that this show of deference to them in the open carriage would convince any of the promenaders whom they might encounter — always excepting those who might have witnessed their descent from the London coach the preceding evening—that his travelling companions were people of consideration.

Arrived at Lewes, after a stage remarkable for the exorbitant tolls which are levied on

the road, the party reached the "Star" in perfect safety and excellent time. Their appearance was the signal for a ringing of bells, and an outrush of waiters, to an extent perfectly astounding to Jem, who had no idea of the difference in the effect producible by four horses when drawing what looked like a private carriage, and that created by them when dragging a stage-coach. All enquiries as to accommodation being satisfactorily answered, dinner was ordered, and John and his father-in-law proceeded to make their purchase of the stamp at the library; whence they repaired to the theatre, where Jack, by dint of certain flourishes, secured one of the stage-boxes, which, luckily for the gratification of his ambitious heart, had been given up only a few minutes before by a very distinguished country lady who was unable to occupy it, because her ninth child had been suddenly attacked with scarletina.

In turning away from the door of the play-house, Jack was struck by the well-turned figure of an exceedingly smartly-dressed wo-

man, whom by her gait and manner, taken in connexion with the locality, he was induced on the instant to set down in his own mind as one of the actresses. Jack was right; it was one of those fair and fascinating creatures, who, as Gay says of women in general,

“——seduce all mankind;”

but his surprise was inconceivably great when he saw her, the moment she recognised his companion, hasten up and hold out her hand towards him with all the warmth and cordiality of “old friendship.”

“Why, Mr. Salmon,” said Miss Roseville, “what brings *you* here?”

“Chance, and a little business together,” said Salmon; “twig?”

“I hope you mean to come to the play to-night,” said Miss Roseville, with one of those looks which it is beyond the power of pen to describe.

“We have just taken a box,” said Salmon.

“Where are you staying?” said Miss Roseville.

“At the Star,” was the reply.

“ Do you stay long ?”

“ No,” said Salmon ; “ go to-morrow.”

“ Oh you naughty thing !” said the lady.

“ Well, good b’ye, if I don’t see you till the evening ;—I lodge at the milliner’s, just opposite,—good b’ye.”

Her departure was a considerable relief to J. S., who was kept in a state of perpetual twitter during the brief parley between them. He would willingly have given five pounds not to have encountered the fair syren while in the society of Brag ; and would now have readily given twice as much to ensure his silence upon the subject when they got home.

“ Why,” said Brag, “ you seem quite free and easy with that young creechur — who is she ?”

“ That,” said Jim, “ is Molly Hogg. I’ve known her these three years ;—she is engaged at one of the Minors, and calls herself, in the bills, Roseville,—it sounds better than Hogg ;—very good-natured girl.”

“ She seems so,” said Brag, “ and no mistake.”

“ I ’m sure I didn’t think of finding *her* here,” said Salmon : “ I haven’t seen her now for a good while.”

“ Uncommon pretty,” said Brag. “ I suppose I have seen her before — don’t recollect, — see so many — eh ?”

“ Well,” said Salmon, evidently nervous, “ shall we go and do this bill ? I ’ll give you the checque ; or, if you like, I ’ll draw it in town to-morrow, and cross it to your banker’s — save another stamp — twig ? — And, John — there’s no harm in what I ’m going to say — only you *can* do me a favour.”

“ What is it ?” said Brag, “ name it, and i’s done, — straight up, right down, and no mistake.”

“ Why,” said Salmon, looking uncommonly sheepish ; “ there’s nothing in it — but — I — wish you wouldn’t say anything to Titsy about my meeting little Hogg.”

“ Not I,” said John ; “ I know the female sex too well not to know how easy they are made jealous. I conclude there’s nothing serious ?” —

“ —Nothing, upon my life !” said Salmon :
“ besides, I give you my word, I haven’t seen
the girl these six months — twig ?”

“ Mum ’s the word,” said Brag ; “ no — no
— there ’s no use making quarrels in families —
life ’s too short for that, eh ?” —

“ Why, Mr. Brag,” said somebody in a
stentorian voice, “ I thought we had stolen
a march upon you, and left you at East-
bourne.”

Brag turned suddenly round on hearing
himself accosted, and beheld his sporting
friend Peckover.

“ Oh, sir,” said Jack, “ here you are !”

“ Yes,” said the gentle giant ; “ Mrs. Peck-
over was invited to join Lady Patcham’s
party at the play ; it is what the actors call
her bespeak, so she has come here, and dines
with Lady Patcham early, in order to be in
time.”

“ We are going to the play too,” said
Jack.

“ Mrs. Peckover seems to think,” said Mr.
P., “ that the house will be very full ; and she

tells me that the play is a good play, and that some of the players are good players ; for *my* part I don't trouble my head much about such things—Ha, ha, ha !—Do you stay here, or return to-night ?”

“ Stay,” said Jack.

“ You are like Mrs. Peckover,” answered the other ; “ she doesn't mean to go back till the morning,—for, as she says, a drive in the dark, of nineteen miles, after the heat of a play-house, is no treat—Ha, ha, ha !”

“ Are you at an inn ?” said Brag.

“ Yes,” said his friend, “ Mrs. Peckover patronizes ‘ The Star ;’ she says it is the best house. She has secured rooms there,—at least, so she has sent me word from Lady Patcham's. I leave all these things to her.”

“ Well, sir,” said Brag, “ I suppose we shall meet in the evening. Stiffkey went off to Hastings this morning ; he will be back at Eastbourne in the evening.”

“ Capital fellow, the Colonel,” said Mr. P. “ Mrs. Peckover says she thinks him one of the most agreeable men she ever met, — and

she's a tolerably good judge of these matters. —Ha, ha! Do you go back to stay at the hotel?"

"Probably not," said Brag. "I have got a very pressing invitation to the Isle of Wight — can't be everywhere."

"No," said P. "I only asked, because Mrs. Peckover means to invite the Colonel to dine with us one day this week, and she was enquiring this morning how long you proposed to stay."

"I'm afraid I must start," said Brag, "however, if I should go back, in course I shall have the pleasure of seeing you."

"Good morning!" said Peckover; "I must go and find Mrs. Peckover: she told me she should be down in the town shopping with Lady Patcham. I must not lose sight of her. Good morning!"

"Good morning!" said Jack, and away he and his friend proceeded to their temporary residence, where they were received by Mrs. Salmon in a tempestuous humour, the sweetness of her temper having been curdled, and

her spirit stirred by circumstances which were but too soon developed.

“ Well, I ’m sure, gentlemen,” said the matron as they entered the room, “ you haven’t hurried yourselves.”

“ We have been shopping, Titsy,” said Salmon.

“ Don’t Titsy me, sir !” replied the lady, her cheeks burning, and her eyes almost starting out of her head. “ I have been shopping too : you did not suppose I was going to be stewed up in this place, while you and Mr. John were flirting all about the town. I have got eyes, Mr. Salmon, and I ’ll take care and make pretty good use of them—I can tell you *that*. Pray, sir, who was that fine flaunting miss in the lavender-coloured gown, with the short petticoats, and platted tails hanging over her shoulders ?”

“ Gown !” said Jem.

“ Tails !” said Jack.

“ Yes !” said the lady, reddening with rage, “ gowns, and tails : you are a nice pair ; you ’d do uncommon well to run in a curricule, I ’m

thinking. I ask you who that dressed-up minx was, that you were talking to in the street?"

"A friend of mine, my dear mother," said Brag, resolved to bind Jem eternally to him by an act of self-devotion, which, in the first instance, might induce him to make the cheque five hundred instead of three—"knew her in London—one of the actresses:—met her at Lord Tom's—used always to take a box at her benefit:—very amiable girl—supports an aged mother and nine orphan brothers and sisters."

"A friend of yours, Master Johnny, is she!" said Mrs. Salmon; "why, then, I wonder she didn't shake you by the hand instead of Mr. Jim:—that won't do — no, no! *This* was the trick of coming over here to the play, instead of enjoying the agreeable company of that genteel colonel, and showing him how we had made up matters, and how comfortable we could live together. Oh! to be sure! Mr. Salmon saw in the playbill who was to act here, and off he comes, helter-skelter, no matter what's to pay, in order to see *her* painted face."

“ I assure you, Titsy,” said Salmon, “ I did not know a word about it : and as for going to the play, if you don’t like it, we won’t go ; and if you like to go back to Eastbourne, we will go back directly.”

“ I ’m sure that ’s fair enough,” said Brag ; “ so don’t let ’s squabble about nothing. Men of the world know great lots of people for whom they don’t care a brass farthing. Here, dinner ’s just ready—the stage-box secured—all right, and no mistake.”

“ Well,” said the lady, “ I don’t want to break up our little family party, and I should like well enough to go to the play ; but I will not go if that young woman performs to-night. What ’s her name, John ?”

“ Hogg,” said Jack :—“ didn’t you say Hogg, Salmon ?”

“ I !” said Jem — “ no, *you* said her name was Hogg.”

“ So I did, to be sure,” said Jack.

“ Have you got the playbill, sir ?” said the lady to her husband.

“ Yes, there it is,” said Salmon. “ And

now while Titsy is looking that over, we may as well do this job about the cheque."

"All right," said Jack; "come along — here's pen and ink. You draw on me, I accept — payable at my banker's."

At this moment, and just as Mrs. Salmon had satisfied herself that no person blest with the euphonic name of Hogg was to contribute to the entertainment of that night's audience, a tall, fresh-coloured chambermaid opened the door, having previously tapped at it, and entered the room.

"I believe, ma'am," said she, addressing Mrs. Salmon, "my mistress misunderstood you: she said there were only two beds wanting to-night:—do both the gentlemen stay here?"

"Yes," said Mrs. Salmon — "both."

"Then the young gentlemen will want two," said the maid, "and——"

"No, no," said Mrs. Salmon, "we want but two."

"Then, where will your son sleep, ma'am?" asked the maid.

"My son," said Mrs. Salmon — "why in his

own bed to be sure — where else should he sleep ?”

“ Then where will Mr. Brag sleep, ma’am ?” said the maid, who had arrived at the knowledge of his name, in consequence of his accustomed enquiries after his “servant and carriage,” which he had told the landlord he firmly believed to have been at Lewes.

“ Why, Mr. Brag *is* my son,” said the lady.

“ Oh ! beg pardon, ma’am,” said the chambermaid — “ I thought the other young gentleman was *your* son, being the same name.”

“ Thought !” said Mrs. Salmon — “ then you had better not have taken the trouble of thinking anything about it. Mr. Salmon is my husband : — will *that* satisfy you ?”

“ Oh ! quite, ma’am,” said the maid, looking exceedingly surprised, and particularly foolish — “ I beg pardon, — I ——”

And so she retired, having by no means contributed to the settlement of Mrs. Salmon’s agitated mind, who, the moment the door was shut, fired up anew, and exclaimed in a tone of exasperation —

“No wonder, Mr. Jemes, the woman should be mistaken. I have no doubt she saw your goings on in the street, and so made up her mind that you couldn’t be a married man.”

“Never mind her mistake, mother,” said Jack, who was determined to keep all things smooth; “you can’t expect much wisdom in a chambermaid — so — now here’s dinner, let us overcome all our little worries, and you two shake hands and be friends, and no mistake.”

“Come, Titsy,” said Salmon, holding out his hand.

“Oh!” said the lady snatching away hers, “I’ve no patience with you.”

When they sat down to their meal, common prudence dictated the observance of tranquillity and civility before the waiters, and the dinner happening to be good, and the wine extremely palatable, the matron softened from her stern resolve, and before it was time to go to the play, peace was restored, and a calumet-like glass to the healths of their noble selves concluded the sitting, whence, it must

be owned, Mrs. Salmon rose with some reluctance, and not a little difficulty. The change of air, the increased exercise, the bottled porter at luncheon, the irritation before dinner, and the strong-bodied port wine after it, had combined to cloud the clearness of her mental faculties, and, to a certain extent, deteriorate from her bodily activity.

Supported, however, by her living, loving props, the matron succeeded in reaching the theatre. When they arrived, the play had just begun, and the bangings and flappings of the door and the seats drew all eyes to the stage-box, in the front row of which, and nearly occupying it all, Mrs. Salmon placed herself, J. S. taking his seat beside her—

“ Still fond, and amorous, and billing,

Like Philip and Mary on a shilling:”—

Jack occupying the place immediately behind his mother. To be sure, however desirable the stage-box might have appeared to be, the circumstances which had occurred during the day, rendered it, if a post of honour, at least a post of danger, particularly as far as Jem was

concerned. In the first place, the glare of the whole row of flaring lights in front of the stage rested directly upon Mrs. Salmon's eyes; in the second place, the illumination proceeding from the said lights exhibited her personal attractions, and all the peculiarity of her costume, with a most awful precision to the audience; and in the third place, their proximity to the actors, and the view which the box commanded of "behind the scenes," not only destroyed her comfort as destroying the illusion, but afforded the most unfortunately favourable opportunity for Miss Roseville, *née* Hogg, to telegraph J. S. at every available opportunity.

In the opposite box and the box adjoining it, were ranged Lady Patcham's party, including the Peckovers, Mr. Peckover having been placed in the corner next the stage of the third row of the stage-box, in which snuggery it is probable Mrs. Peckover thought he would be more at his ease than anywhere else.

The play was Othello. The Moor, by what

is called a London star, — King Log amongst the frogs ; — and as ill-luck would have it, Miss Roseville, who in London had been doomed to the humbler walks of the illegitimate drama, was the Desdemona. She was, naturally, elated at her promotion, and determined to act in right earnest. To Mrs. Salmon “Shakspeare” was yet a sealed book, — she seldom went to theatres in London, and even if she did, the size of the houses, combined with the distance at which she sat from the stage, would have rendered any one of his finest plays a mere blank to her mind. But it so happened that she had never seen Othello, and, although it is quite impossible to spare sufficient space in these pages to record all her running commentary on the text as it proceeded, we may be able to save a little of it, which certainly did contain some new ideas and illustrations, even after Johnson, Warburton, Steevens, Malone, and Co. had done their best, or worst.

In the senate scene she began to criticise the probability of the story.—“ Run away with an

old man's daughter ! — what, a nigger !—Stuff —nonsense, Jim—not true.—What does he mean by his head and front ?—I don't see any curls.—Antropopygeis—where do they live ? —with their heads under their shoulders.—Well I'm sure—heard her story by parcels—that was to save postage, I suppose.”

This accompaniment was droned out in a tone of voice sufficiently loud to induce the audience to cry, “ Hush ! hush ! silence ! ” and to compel Jack just respectfully to hint that his mother's remarks were, unlike the speeches of certain modest members in another place, quite audible in the gallery ; — but — just as the “ nigger,” as Mrs. Salmon called the “ Moor,” had got to the words

—————“ she wished

That Heaven had made *her* such a man.”

Desdemona, — Miss Roseville, — Molly Hogg herself, appeared at the wing, ready to come on :— the moment she arrived there, and before her train was consigned to the dirt of the stage, her eye caught that of Salmon ;

—a look of recognition followed,—the excited matron saw it;—she, what she called, “contained herself” at the minute,—but, coupling what she had seen in the afternoon with what she then witnessed, she was not long in making up her mind, that, although she had unplatted her tails and lengthened her petticoats, the girl in the lavender gown in the street, was the nigger’s wife in the play.

Miss Roseville was extremely well received, and played very respectably, and things went on very quietly; but, after Mrs. Salmon had somewhat loudly denounced Brabantio as an old fool for making it up, and the scene had proceeded to where Othello takes Desdemona away, Miss Roseville, having nothing better to do, cast a lightning look at Jem Salmon, standing within two yards of him, and when she made her exit, the old lady could no longer resist the influence of her rage.

“Did you see *that*, Mr. Jemes?” said she.

“What, Titsy?—what?” asked Salmon.

“That girl’s look at *you*,” replied the enraged wife; “I’m sure it’s the same I saw you

talking to before dinner:—if she does it again I'll speak to her — I will —”

“ My dear mother,” said Jack, interposing in a whisper. The attempt, however, was futile ; the dæmon had been awakened, and was not so easily to be appeased. It is true, that while the dreadful Desdemona was out of sight, it seemed to slumber ; although when Cassio, by Iago's desire, gives Emilia a chaste salute, Mrs. Salmon's delicacy was so greatly alarmed, that she exclaimed, “ Well, I'm sure, what next ?” which created a slight laugh in the vicinity of the stage, and even on the stage itself ; and when Othello performed a similar act of kindness to Desdemona, a somewhat similar observation escaped her. Still, as the heroine happened to be placed during that short scene with her back towards their box, nothing occurred to rouse the lion, until, as she turned to go off, the irresistible desire of Miss Roseville, *née* Hogg, to ascertain who Mrs. Salmon was, and in what manner she could be related to or connected with her smart friend Jem, induced her to throw another transient glance into the

corner where they sat,—a movement which was instantly followed by Mrs. Salmon's giving her husband a pinch, of anything but an amatory character, on his knee, accompanied with a terrific "Ugh," at the bottom of her voice.

Her agitation now became visible, and the next thing she did, was to take so horrible a dislike to Iago, for being vulgar enough to mention King Stephen's inexpressibles by their coarsest and commonest name, that her companions began to think she was sufficiently disgusted with what was going on, to wish to retire; — but no — as soon as *the* scene between Othello and Iago commenced, her attention was fatally recalled. She fancied and felt that it was all real, and got so interested in the progress of the discovery of Desdemona's guilt, of which she was herself perfectly satisfied, that she kept encouraging him by continuous exclamations of "That's right,"—"Tell him all,"—"Nasty hussey!"—and when he came to the words

"Beware, my lord, of jealousy,
It is a green-eyed monster,"—

she could not help saying to J. S. in a tone by no means confidential — “Better *that* than a black-eyed one at any rate.”

Things after this proceeded rather calmly, until the Moor, in the height of his rage and abhorrence, exclaimed in a most impassioned manner —

“ I ’d rather be a toad ”—

Mrs. Salmon, who did not wait for the alternative, cried out loud enough to be heard half over the house — “ Well, that ’s a rum taste, anyhow !”

This observation again attracted the attention of the gentle Desdy, who was again at the side scene waiting for her cue to come on with the handkerchief, and again her regards were thrown upon Salmon.

“ There, Jim,” said the lady — “ there she is again.” And when she appeared solacing her husband on account of his headache, all her anxieties were met by her respectable rival and auditor, with the words “ Gammon !” — “ Pooh !” — “ I don’t believe you ;” until, on quitting the stage, and repeating the words,

“ I am very sorry to see that you are not well !”

Miss Hogg certainly *did* look somewhat pointedly at Mrs. Salmon herself.

“ I ’ll tear her eyes out, Jemes,” said the bride.

“ Shall I go away, Titsy ?” said Salmon.

“ Go away, indeed !” replied the lady—“ no no ! — you don’t budge an inch. — Did you ever,” continued she, turning to her son, “ ever see such imperence as that ? I ’ll watch her pretty closely, and if it’s what I think — if I don’t ! — Never mind ; them as lives longest sees the most.”

This sounded ominous, but Jack and Salmon hoped that nothing more would come of it. However, when Desdemona next appeared, and ventured so near the box that the direction of her eyes could no longer be doubted, although the expression of her countenance was more indicative of anger and curiosity than of love, Mrs. Salmon exclaimed—

“ Jim, I ’ll spit in her face !”

“ Titsy ! Titsy !” said Salmon.

“ Oh, Titsy ! my eye ! ” cried she . — “ can’t I see ? ”

“ Hush ! hush ! hush ! ” cried the audience in the boxes : “ Silence ! ” said the pit : “ Turn her out ! ” roared the gallery.

This noise, the more particularly, attracted the looks of Miss Roseville to the offending party, and consequently provoked some horrid grimaces on the part of the jealous wife, which, when the poor girl put on something like a supplicating look, was consummated by Mrs. Salmon’s performing that, which my friend Mr. Gurney saw the convicted pot-stealer at the Old Bailey exhibit to the astonished judge, in the shape of what is conventionally called a double sight. Still the tumult was suppressed — every glass in Lady Patcham’s box being directed point-blank into Brag’s box — until that part of the scene in which Desdemona, (still availing herself of every opportunity of casting looks rather of enquiry than tenderness towards Salmon,) is spoken to, by Othello, in the most cutting terms. At the end of every one of his severe speeches, Mrs. Salmon kept cry-

ing out in a sort of spasmodic whisper, "That 's it!"—"Give it her, nigger!"—"Sarve her right!"—till at last the Moor becoming so violent, that even the mightiness of Shakspeare himself, does not justify a repetition here of the word he uses, calls her an impudent—something; when Mrs. Salmon, starting from her seat, exclaimed at the top of her voice—"You are right, old fellow!—she *is* one, and I know it!"

Here the uproar became general—the cry of "Turn her out!" instead of being confined to the Gallery,—was universal. The black star came forward and bowed; Desdemona herself stepped to the front of the stage, and performed a certain number of regulation heavings and pantings, amidst loud cries of "Down, down!—Silence, silence!"—Salmon holding his bride back in an immense fright, and Jack actually ready to die of the disaster.

After a few minutes, silence was obtained, when Miss Roseville, trembling like a leaf, said, or rather faltered out:—"La-dies and gen-tle-men,—"(here a flood of tears P. S.

produced three rounds of applause)—“ I am placed in a situation of painful difficulty. Conscious of earnestly exerting the small ability I possess, for your entertainment, I find myself so loudly and constantly interrupted by a lady in the stage-box, of whom I have no knowledge, that I have only to throw myself upon the accustomed liberality of a British public for protection.” (Loud cheers.) “ If I have offended ” — (“ No, no, no !”) — “ Ladies and gentlemen, from my heart I thank you !” This said, with a profound inclination of the head, hands crossed over the bosom, and a curtsy down to the ground, which produced upon Miss Molly Hogg’s drapery the effect of what is called, in gamesome times, “ making a cheese,” produced reiterated shouts, accompanied with cries — “ Turn them out !—turn them out !”

Now had Mrs. Salmon’s wrath reached its highest pitch : “ I won’t go out !” she exclaimed. “ It’s all very fine your talking ; but I tell you what, Miss Hogg — I won’t let you stand making sheep’s-eyes at my J. S.—I won’t ; and if you come near him, I’ll tear them out of

your head, and leave you to see through the holes."

Here the riot and confusion were such as to convince Brag that nothing but the retirement of his respectable parent could save her from expulsion; he therefore put on a supplicating air, and begged her to come out with *him* — a petition in which Mr. Salmon earnestly joined, and for which his exemplary bride, having no other means of venting her rage, gave him a most tremendous slap in the face, which sent him sprawling over the second seat, accompanied with a loud remark, that he was as bad as Molly Hogg. Jack, assisted by a box-keeper and the manager, succeeded in getting the infuriated dame into the lobby, whence seeing a door at its termination evidently leading on to the stage, she dashed through it, and if, by the merest chance in the world, her companions had not kept fast hold of her, she would assuredly have rushed on to the scene, and utterly annihilated the gentle heroine of the night, in the sight of all the audience.

To Brag, the events of the evening were

destructive, as far as Eastbourne, or that part of Sussex went : they would form an era in the theatrical annals of Lewes ; and the delight which Mrs. Peckover exhibited during the whole proceeding, was but too certain a confirmation of Jack's previous suspicion, that she had directed Peckover to find out when he meant to leave the neighbourhood, in order that she might regulate her invitation to Colonel Stiffkey, so that it might not be sent to him until his little sporting friend was gone.

Here was another of the numerous disastrous results of Jack's unconquerable propensity for rhodomontade and quackery. If he had not made himself ridiculous at Dover, he need not have feared encountering Gunnersbury at Eastbourne ; he then would not have felt so anxious to get to Lewes, where, as his ill stars decided, a detachment of Eastbourne fashionables had (as if purposely) arrived, in order to be the historians of his exposure to the colonel and his friend upon their return.

When the discomfited trio reached the inn, much to the surprise of the host and hostess,

the condition of Mrs. Salmon was beyond description pitiable. Brag and Salmon were quite aware that the matter would not rest where it was : that Miss Roseville, *née* Hogg, knowing from his own lips where he lived at Lewes, would most unquestionably despatch a note, or perhaps come herself, to that *locale*, to enquire what the real cause of the elderly gentlewoman's extraordinary and outrageous conduct could really be ; and Salmon's looks, occasionally interchanged with Brag, spoke too plainly his apprehensions on that score to be misinterpreted.

That Mrs. Salmon would permit her J. S. to leave the house that evening, or indeed trust him out of her sight till after their return to London, was not to be imagined ; and therefore Jack, with a good-humour not uncongenial with his vanity and folly, determined to save the *éclat* of such a visitation by returning to the theatre himself, seeking out the young lady, and explaining, in Salmon's name, the real history of the case. His difficulty was, how to " put Salmon up" as he called it, " to what

he contemplated :” however, he thought if he mentioned his return to the playhouse with an emphasis upon the words “he wanted to see somebody particularly,” his father-in-law would understand what he was going to do, and there would be no mistake,—Jack certainly being rather stimulated to his friendly exertions in the affair by his opinion of Miss Hogg’s personal attractions, and being moreover anxious, for the sake of his mother’s peace of mind, to ascertain to what extent the intimacy of James and the romantic Molly had actually been carried.

Of course Mrs. Salmon did not interfere to prevent her son’s return, which he told her he felt necessary ; but although he really did contrive to make Mr. Salmon understand that it was for *his* good he was going, the unfortunate husband apprehended so much from being left *tête-à-tête* with his bride, after the indiscreet use of what she called “Miss Hogg’s black rollers,” that he would have preferred the chance of a battle-royal, in which they would all be engaged together, to the discipline which

he was quite confident he had to undergo when left alone in the society of his lady.

What passed in Jack's absence we do not seek to enquire; suffice it to say, that, after various applications to the servants for water and hartshorn, and sundry other restoratives, Mr. and Mrs. Salmon departed to bed—whether to rest or not, it is not for us to determine. A message was left with the waiter for Mr. Brag, that they had secured places by the morning-coach for London, and should breakfast before they started. In fact, everything had been so decently conducted after John's departure, that the waiters and others concerned in the administration of affairs at "The Star," and who had up to that time received no intelligence of the "row" at the play-house, were perfectly unconscious that there had been such a storm, or that the ill-matched pair resident in their house had played so prominent a part in the performances of the evening.

When Jack reached the theatre, he procured an audience of Miss Roseville, whom he found

protected by her mamma, and dressed *à la paysanne*, ready to sing the popular ballad,—

“I ’m a poor country maid, that ’s for sartain,”

for the performance of which she was particularly celebrated. He explained to her in his smartest manner the history of the affair, and that he had called on the part of his friend, to explain away the extraordinary conduct of the lady who was his wife.

“What !” said Miss Roseville, *née* Hogg, “is Salmon married to that old catamaran ? I shouldn’t be surprised, ma’, if she was the old tallow-chandler’s widow, with the fool of a son, that he used to talk to us about.”

“Very likely, my dear,” said Mrs. Hogg : “Keep your shawl round your throat, dear. We are very much obliged to this gentleman for explaining that it was not Mr. Salmon’s fault.”

“Very much indeed,” said the young lady. “Of course the public press will give a proper explanation of the affair ; it is a case that must be deeply interesting to every lover of the drama, and indeed to everybody in the empire,

—for it is a most extraordinary affair. Ma' and I know several of the gentlemen who are engaged 'on' the London papers, and we mean to draw up a statement which will no doubt be satisfactory, and remove any unfavourable impressions which an incorrect report of the transaction may in the first instance make."

"But I think, dear," said Mrs. Hogg, "you should send a civil message to Mr. Salmon, and say you are sure he had no share in the disturbance, because, dear, he has always been a very kind friend to *you*."

"Pray, say that to him, sir," said the young lady; "and if you have an opportunity of speaking to him alone, ask him from *me*, if his present amiable lady is really the Widow Waddle?—he'll know whom I mean."

"My dear love, what a girl you are!" said mamma.

"But," said Jack, "perhaps that may be dangerous; it *may* be Widow Waddle, and then——"

"It won't make the least difference," said the playful young creature. "What she *has*,

not what she *is*,—he used to say; and as it was only her money he married her for, now he has got *that*, and put capering Jack's nose out of joint, you may say what you please of the widow."

"And whom," said Brag, "did my friend Jim call capering Jack?"

"Why that, sir," said Mrs. Hogg, "was what he used to call the old woman's son, who has turned fine gentleman, and we used to have great fun about him: Salmon used to give us imitations of him whenever he came to sup with us."

That they had not been good imitations seemed tolerably evident, inasmuch as the original had not been recognised. However, Jack went on making the amiable, somewhat agitated, and rather hurried by the novelty of his position and the bustle going on behind the scenes, and, above all, by the concluding and conclusive evidence as to the character of his father-in-law's affection for his mother, his marriage with whom appeared, from what he had just heard and seen, extremely like a stepping-

stone to the future attainment of the hand of Miss Roseville, *née* Hogg.

"I'll give Mr. Salmon your message, depend upon it," said Jack. "Do you stay long here, Miss?"

"No," said the mamma, "we go up to town to-morrow, by the coach, and soto Northampton, where Mary has got a three nights' engagement. When we return, her regular theatre opens,—and we shall settle down in London."

"I assure you," said Miss Roseville, "I shall not be sorry;—this starrng is very tiresome work."

"By the coach to-morrow!" said Jack, thinking to himself how very agreeably that would "come off," if it should be the same coach into which the "Widow Waddle" and her hopeful spouse were to pack themselves. "Well, ladies, I've done my duty—executed my commission. I'm much obliged by your civility, and glad to have satisfied you that as far as Mr. Salmon and myself are concerned, we had nothing to do with this unpleasant business.—Good night, ladies."

Saying which, Jack retired under a heavy fire of acknowledgments and reciprocated good wishes, and returned to the inn greatly relieved at finding the coast clear. He received the message that had been left for him; and after revolving in his mind, over a glass of "hot mixture," the occurrences of the evening, and the information he had derived from the fair Thespian, satisfied himself that they all had their origin in his own ever-failing dexterity in attempting to wriggle out of difficulties, into which his unquenchable vanity and conceit were perpetually hurrying him.

After summing up the whole of the case, he resolved that the extraordinary conduct of his mother, coupled with the hypocrisy and worthlessness of her husband, fully justified his retiring in disgust, and leaving them to their own inventions. He therefore called for pen, ink, and paper, and having ascertained that the whole history of the *écumène* at the play-house was now known all over the inn, began, when the waiter produced them, to denounce the extraordinary conduct of the eccentric old

lady, with whom he denied anything more than a casual acquaintance—she, as the reader may remember, having herself, before dinner, indignantly proclaimed their consanguinity to the chambermaid. Having concluded his letter addressed to Salmon,—announcing the absolute necessity of his starting by seven o'clock for the Isle of Wight, in order to avail himself of the offer of a seat in the carriage of a friend, whom he had met at the playhouse on his return; and having desired his affectionate love to his mother, signed himself Mr. Salmon's "faithful and sincere," and added in the postscript, "Don't forget to pay in the three hundred pounds to-morrow, or the next day, as I shall have occasion to draw upon it," he folded and sealed the despatch, and proceeding to his room, desired to be called at half-past six, resolved to bolt before the "happy pair" were stirring.

CHAPTER III.

It was not until after Mr. Brag had come to the resolution of evacuating Lewes, that he decided upon the place to which he should shift his head-quarters. Brighton he had no intention of visiting ; and it was while he was in a state of perfect indecision upon the important point, firm only to the determination of “going,” his eye happened to glance over the newspaper which lay on the table, and he perceived amongst the intelligence from the Isle of Wight, that his friend, as he called every man whom he had seen twice in his life — his friend Lord Wagley was at Cowes, with his “beautiful yacht, the Jigumaree ;” and that the place was crammed with visitors, the harbour crowded with vessels, and, in short, that nothing upon the face of the earth or the water

had ever been so gay and captivating as that exquisitely beautiful spot.

Jack's heart began to beat ; he longed to try his fate once more. Like the tired soldier roused by the "brazen trumpet's sound," he longed to

———— "dare again the field."

The lord and his yacht — the good-natured lord too, his colleague in the arrangement of the steeple-chase — one of the few of his aristocratic friends who went the length of calling him Jack — nothing could suit better. It is true he was a crony of Lord Tom Towzle's ; but Lord Tom was in Paris, or would be, before Jack got to Cowes ; so that the disagreeable affair at Dover could not have reached "that tight little island ;" therefore, as it seemed, no possible objection existed to his invasion of the Vectan shore.

To carry his scheme (having, as we know, resolved upon its adoption) into execution, our hero rose early, dressed hastily, and having engaged one of the men about the house to carry his small but convenient valise, in which,

by some skill in the art of compression, he contrived to pack his wardrobe with a compactness equalled only by that in which hay for foreign service is squeezed into a portable state, he proceeded to "The White Hart," where, having dismissed his attendant, he ordered breakfast, and proposed ensconcing himself until the departure of his dear and respectable relations, who had rendered themselves much too notorious on the preceding evening to continue desirable associates in the good town of Lewes.

This march was another of the minor evils to which Jack was in the habit of subjecting himself by his constant efforts to be fine. In order to get rid of his entanglement with Jem and his lady, he felt it necessary to make a little history of a visionary friend and an imaginary chariot—in which chariot, by its owner's kindness, he was to be suddenly transported to the Isle of Wight—not recollecting that, taking the length of the proposed journey into consideration, no such early start could have been in the slightest degree necessary ; a circum-

stance not very material in the present case, inasmuch as neither the slumbering James nor his suspicious spouse had established in their minds any very correct notion of the relative distances of the different parts of the British, or indeed any other empire upon the face of the earth.

To keep up the delusion which he felt it agreeable to play off, it became essential that he should not leave "The Star" in either post-chaise, stage-coach, or any other conveyance; because if he did so, as he must, conveniently to himself, have done, there would have been the evidence of the master of the house, the mistress, and all the servants, to prove to the Salmons that the redoubted "sporting character" had gone in no friend's chariot, but that he had transported himself towards the place of his destination in the said chaise, stage-coach, or whatever he might have selected for the purpose. To prevent this disclosure, therefore, he had to take all the unnecessary trouble which we have just described, and absolutely hide himself until some opportunity presented itself for escaping the violence of his

mother, the lamentations of Salmon, the enquiries of Peckover, and probably the curiosity of the whole Patcham party, instead of driving off at any hour which might best have suited his convenience.

Truly, indeed, does the proverb say, that "pride knows no pain." One fiftieth part of the turmoil and exertion which Jack underwent to attain a character which he never could support, properly applied to the advancement of his prosperity and respectability in his natural sphere, would in all probability have secured him ease and competence. However, ours is to describe rather than reason upon the conduct of people, and we therefore resume the narrative.

The earliness of the hour at which he directed his breakfast to be prepared, and the short time which he occupied in consuming it, afforded him the opportunity of watching the departure of the coach for London. Minutes seemed hours as he kept his eyes strained in every direction, listening with the most eager expectation for the rattle of the wheels and the clatter of the traces, which should announce the

arrival at the door of "The Star" inn, of the vehicle destined, as he tremblingly anticipated, to contain for the next six hours the jarring elements—the fire and water—the oil and vinegar, embodied and humanized in the shapes of Mrs. Salmon and Miss Roseville, whose announcement to Jack of her departure the next morning was, as has been seen, instantly coupled in his mind with the possible—the almost probable—circumstance of her becoming the travelling companion of the venerable catamaran whom she had so feelingly and so unconsciously denounced to her son the night before.

Should this be the case, thought Jack, there will be a slashing race, and no mistake. From the little he had seen of Molly Hogg, it was evident that a very little provocation would turn the radiant fire of love, which sparkled in her looks and countenance, into the forked lightning of indignant anger. The honeyed words which the sweet bard of Avon had taught to drop from her roseate lips, would in an instant be discarded for the expression of her own feelings in less poetic language; and any remark which his mother might happen to ven-

ture touching the use which the heroine made of the brilliant orbs with which nature had so liberally gifted her, would, he had little doubt, provoke some practical resentment on *her* part well calculated to render any compliment to a pair of black eyes as applicable to her antagonist as to herself, in a few minutes after it had been paid.

With all these forebodings in his mind, and hating Miss Hogg for her description of himself, and at the bottom of his heart feeling that her intimacy with Salmon was not any very satisfactory evidence as to the future comfort of the parent whom he had driven into the marriage, the reader may easily judge Jack's dismay when, after hearing the long wished-for wheels rolling along the street, he found the sound suddenly cease, and saw the coach stop at the door of the milliner's house at which the *aimable* Roseville had indicated to Salmon that she resided.

Nature so far struggled with conceit and vanity in Jack's mind, that the moment he saw this occur, he felt disposed to rush from his re-

tirement, fly to "The Star," admit the groundlessness of his excuse for absence, and advise his mother either to stay another day, or, at all events, proceed by another vehicle to London. He quitted the window whence he had seen the arrival, and his hand was on the lock of the door of the parlour in which he was lodged, when his good resolution failed him, and he returned to watch the departure of the passengers. If he went out, he should be obliged to enter into a thousand explanations; if he gave his reasons why his mother had better not go, her anger would have induced her to "seek the battle," rather than "shun it when it came;" while if, on the other hand, she admitted the reasonableness of his suggestions, he should have her on his hands, the object of universal curiosity and conversation for four-and-twenty hours more. He therefore determined to let things take their course.

After keeping the coach waiting some ten minutes, Miss Hogg, enveloped in a huge cloak and shawls, made her appearance at the door, and stepped into the vehicle, followed by her

“ma’,” who permitted merit and genius to take precedence of age and maternity;—the elder lady of the two, bearing in her hand a huge basket with a handle and flaps, O. P. and P. S., evidently containing sundry papers of sandwiches, and a bottle of something, wherewith to refresh themselves during the journey.

Well, said Jack to himself, that’s it : now then for the blow-up !—But the coach still lingered ; and Jack’s sight was presently gratified by the sudden appearance of the “star” from London who had enacted Othello, enveloped also in a cloak, and accompanied by a friend and worshipper, who made a point of going to see him act let it be wheresoever it might. There are many small strugglers after a reputation for something, who pin themselves to some really deserving object of popular attention, and so make for themselves a kind of moon-like character, reflected from the sun of which they are the satellites. This was one.

The small thing, who was dressed in a cloak ditto to that of Mr. Teeardeyell, was a man of considerable fortune, which devolved upon him

at the death of his father who had amassed it in trade ; and having just come into possession of it at the period when the town, as it is called, was undecided between the merits of Mr. Teeardeyell at one theatre, and Mr. somebody else at the other, he attached himself to *his* faction, made a friend of its head, and presented him with a cane and cocked hat, the indubitable property of Garrick ; a snuff-box which Addison gave Booth after his performance of Cato, on the inside of the lid of which, was this line by Swift —

To the best Booth in the fair : —

in fact, everything he could do to render his friendship for and association with his favourite lion notorious, the weak and wealthy jackal did.

When Brag saw the coach (licenced to carry only four insides,) thus freighted, his heart was relieved, and he watched its further progress to the door of “The Star” with confidence and security ; —how well grounded the reader may imagine, when, after a brief pause, he beheld a ladder brought forth and placed against the hinder wheel of the machine, followed by his

respected mother, handed out by her husband. The lady who was all muffled up and packed for travelling, and filled with solicitude lest "rude Boreas" might embarrass her in her ascent towards the elevation to which she aspired, never cast her eyes towards the coach window, but proceeded at once to mount. But Salmon, however assiduous and active in helping her up, and in doing what she called "keeping her things down," unluckily for his peace cast one glance towards the four "insides," and in that glance assured himself of the presence of Miss Roseville and her ma'.

In every grief there is a gradation of sorrow : that Molly Hogg should be in the coach was a cause of wretchedness rendered more painful by the anxious expectation of what would inevitably happen when they met wherever, as the phrase goes, the coach stopped to dine. To prevent his bride's joining in that repast he knew would be impossible, — and then what a scene ! Yet, horrid as this anticipation was, it was trifling by comparison with that which must have happened if they had secured inside

places. Nothing, he was quite convinced, had ever occurred in the world at all to equal the consequences of such a juxtaposition, unless, indeed, it was the affair of the Kilkenny cats, which ferocious animals, as the deeply "*redde*" in Miller's History of Ireland, and the rest of the world know, fought in a saw-pit until nothing was left of either of them but their tails.

Away rolled the coach, and while Mrs. Salmon was making herself snug and comfortable, Jim was calculating what was best to be done. He knew that they were to stop at Godstone; he knew too well Titsy's admiration of the mutton chops there. Could he by any means break the ladder which they would bring out to facilitate her descent, or rather effect it, for, without that, she could not leave her point of elevation! A thousand things suggested themselves, but one after the other was discarded from his mind as impracticable, until, before they had got to Uckfield, every hope he had cherished was destroyed, every scheme he had imagined blown to atoms, by a remark made by his better and his bigger half, that the air must be

uncommon wholesome, because she “felt so peckish in spite of her bad spirits:”—the injured Titsy still playing the offended wife, but little thinking that the delicate, Venus-like occiput of her hated rival was within an inch of her own great toe, and separated from it only by a bit of leather.

In this state of affairs, progressing at the rate of nearly ten miles an hour, we must leave the stage-coach party for the present, and return to our hero, who, however much he shuddered at the appearance of his mother packed amongst the fish, fowl, and firkins, destined for London use, consoled himself with the certainty that, by a little management on the part of Salmon, and the exercise of a little discretion on the part of Miss Hogg, she might escape a collision which, for all their sakes, he so much dreaded.

Jack's next thoughts were devoted to himself and his own purposes. He ascertained that his best and shortest mode of reaching the Isle of Wight was to proceed forthwith to Brighton, and thence, as he chose, pursue his road by Chichester, to Portsmouth, or Southampton, as he

best pleased. At Brighton, Jack had no intention of staying, and as he should arrive there early, the chances were that he might find a conveyance suited to his purpose before the afternoon.

It would be quite useless to follow him in his uninteresting progress to Cowes, to which place he had really directed his landlady in Lambeth to despatch him a fresh supply of clothes, resolved to make himself happy under the auspices of his noble friend, and if possible repair the damage which the events of the last few weeks had done him. Suffice it to say that the reader may safely imagine Jack leaning over the railings of the yacht club-house, having, after his London fashion, obtained ingress so far, by the countenance of the much-respected nobleman upon whom he had fastened himself.

Cowes was, as the newspaper had announced, extremely lively ; its picturesque harbour was, as had been said, richly studded with gay yachts, while the roads were graced by the presence of one or two of His Majesty's craft,

and various ships, brigs, and schooners, waiting for a wind to thread the Needles, and wend their way towards their several places of destination. Jack felt at ease as his ferret-like eyes twinkled at the laughing promenaders before him, and his little heart began to beat with the ambition of becoming a member of the Yacht Club himself. There was something *distingué* in the button, and the society was so agreeable; in fact it was ‘*the thing* ;’ and revolving it much in his mind before he broached his desire to his friend Lord Wagley, there appeared but three objections to his carrying it into immediate execution. The first was, that, not having a yacht, he was not qualified to become a member: the second was, that, if he were qualified, he might not be received: and the third was, that if he had the qualification, and was elected, he hated the sea, sailing, boating, and everything connected with them, to the bottom of his heart; that hate not being altogether unmixed with a feeling which no man might venture personally to attribute to him with impunity. He was, nevertheless, very much of

the opinion of Anacharsis, who classed those who committed themselves to the mercy of the wind and waves, amongst the dead; and not having the advantage of an acquaintance with any of those accommodating Lapland ladies, who Dr. Heywood tells us, (in his ‘Hierarchies of Angels,’)

————— winds to merchants sell,
 Making their cov’nant when and how they please;
 They may with prosperous weather cross the seas,
 As thus,—they in a handkerchief fast tie
 Three knots; and loose the first, and by and by
 You find a gentle gale blow from the shore:
 Open the second, it increaseth more
 To fill the sails: When you the third untie
 Th’ intemperate gusts grow vehement and high;—

Jack felt certain qualms while thinking of the absolute necessity of going afloat, which produced a kind of sea-sickness by anticipation. But then what were his anticipations, apprehensions, or antipathies, when put into the opposite scale to the privileges, (button included,) which his admission into such a body as the Yacht Club would confer upon him!

This notion had taken full possession of his mind, and he waited only for a favourable op-

portunity of opening his heart to his noble friend, whose warmth and good-nature were so satisfactory to him, that in two or three days he became as brisk as ever, and was pushing himself in every possible quarter, and, it must be owned, completely succeeded in planting himself in the character of quality tag upon a Lady Lavinia Newbiggen, and her niece Miss Hastings, to whom he had been presented by his noble friend, who was delighted in the highest degree to get anybody to relieve him in paying those delicate attentions which her ladyship exacted from the little circle by which she was surrounded, where everything agreeable was to be found, her ladyship's own absolutely indispensable presence alone excepted. Of her ladyship and her charming niece, more anon.

It was when Wagley and Jack had been left together, *tête-à-tête*, after the first dinner at her ladyship's to which he had been invited, that he felt himself able to break to his lordship the secret of his great desire to become a member of the 'Royal Squadron.'

"And a deuced good thing too," said Lord

Wagley. "I am not sure, however, that we can ballot for you this year, even if you had a yacht to qualify with; but—of that I'm not certain—the best thing you can do is to get a qualification as soon as possible."

"Oh," said Jack; "what—get a yacht,—out and out,—and no mistake?"

"That is essential," said his lordship, "and she must be one of more than forty tons. Now, the opportunity is tempting—there is at this moment in the harbour—'gad I can shew her to you from these windows if the moon is up—one of the prettiest things that ever swam,—seventy-six tons, there or thereabouts,—cutter-rigged,—all copper fastened,—coppered to the bends,—excellent cabin, mahogany fittings,—uncommon well found in stores,—ready for sea to-morrow,—two regular suits of sails,—belongs to a member well known in these parts,—has won two prizes, and is to be had a regular bargain: there's an opportunity," said his lordship, "which ought not to be lost."

"It is indeed," said Jack;—"built of mahogany, and fastened with copper,—all right down, straight up, and no mistake?"

“Not exactly that,” said his lordship, “but she is perfect of her class,—dirt-cheap.”

“What may be the damage?” said Jack.

“Why,” said his lordship, “take everything as it stands,—ready for a start as she is,—eight hundred and fifty sovereigns, and no haggling!”

“Eight hundred and fifty sovereigns!” said Jack, “that’s a lump of money for mahogany and copper!”

“Money!” exclaimed the peer, “my dear fellow, the chances are, that if Chipstead was not hard up, you wouldn’t get her for a thousand.”

“I’ll think of it,” said Jack. “I confess it would be uncommon pleasant. I don’t like, you see, my lord, to find every fellow taking water, while I stand on the shore, like an old hen looking at young ducks.”

“I assure you she’s worth your attention and the money,” said his lordship, who had got her for an equivocal debt of the before-named Chipstead, who, happening to miss his return for a borough which he had before misrepresented, thought it advisable to take French-

leave of the Yacht Club and the Fleet together, and bestow himself securely at Boulogne sur Mer. His lordship's animated description of the beauties of the abandoned 'Psyche' therefore, however nautically just, were not altogether disinterested.

The wine,—the discussion,—the hope,—the expectation, all combined to confuse and obfuscate Jack's intellect; who, having in the space of less than a week determined that something really *was* to be done in the family of Lady Lavinia very greatly to his advantage, seeing that her ladyship herself paid him marked attentions, while she always appeared to recommend her beautiful niece to his particular notice, and that impressed with an idea of his wealth,—a notion which spread like wildfire at Cowes,—they had resolved upon a line of conduct which, if carried to its extreme point, might after all retrieve his past defeats, and achieve the great object of his ambition,—was determined, as far as in *him* lay, to make a last great effort to soar above his own sphere, and taking an exactly opposite course from his presumptuous prede-

cessor Icarus, carry his point by getting entirely rid of the wax with which he fancied his wings were clogged.

The man who has lost and lost again, calls to Crockford for more counters, feeling a fresh confidence after each succeeding loss, and hoping, Antæus like, to gain new strength from every fall ; goes on, until at last his calling fails, and he arouses himself to a sad conviction of the vanity of the delusion by which he has been led to pursue his ill fortune to extremity :—so did Jack persevere in a course, his discomfitures in which one should have thought, must, as he would himself say, “have taken the shine out of him :”—but no ; here he was again beginning a fresh pursuit, and, as it appeared upon a more important scale, and with more extensive means.

Lady Lavinia Newbiggen was universally voted a nuisance. She was silly and sentimental, and wanted to pass for a blue. She affected to be charmed with everything odd ;—‘a character,’ as she used to call anybody distinguished for doing anything, was her delight ;

an artist was her idol, although she could not distinguish between a Vandyke and a Varley ; an author was a jewel of inestimable price, although she never read a book. To *her*, a man who had been up in a balloon, or down in a diving-bell, was something ; even a celebrity gained by wearing a particularly shaped hat, or an oddly cut coat, was important in her eyes, and, accordingly, wherever she was, her house was filled with all the lions and tigers of the society in which she was set down.

Brag had been presented to her as *the* celebrated steeple-hunter, and the best amateur jockey on the turf. *That* was enough to secure him a favourable reception, although she hated races, and never went to any meeting but Ascot, and then invariably shut her eyes while the horses were running.

The unquestioned success of Lady Lavinia in having established the reputation of being the greatest bore upon earth, did not obtain for her a corresponding admiration on the part of the rest of the world, who were not so ravenously fond of rarities as she either was, or

professed to be, and therefore the attentions of Brag were most acceptable to her. There he was, lounging and giggling with her ladyship, who was sitting on a bench placed outside the door of the house she occupied, on the little grass-plot dignified with the name of garden, while Fanny Hastings, who had neither heart to give nor ears to lend, lingered languidly and listlessly by the side of her aunt. From this "shady blest retreat" they saw yacht after yacht depart, Lord Wagley's among the rest, and not an invitation to "sail" came from any one of them to poor Lady Lavinia.

"Why haven't *you* a yacht, Mr. Brag?" said Lady Lavinia.

That question settled the affair: — Jack's little heart beat ninety to the minute.

"Then Fanny and I," continued her ladyship, "might perhaps be favoured with a cruise."

Another palpitation at a considerably increased rate.

"For my part," said her ladyship, "I cannot bear what are called commonplace people.

These young men are all very well, and they are people of rank, and suitable, and all that — but I am, as you know, only excited by something *piquante*; — don't you understand?"

"Exactly, my lady," said Jack; "straight up, right down, and no mistake."

"No mistake!" said her ladyship — "I hate mistakes — yes. — Well then, if you had a yacht——"

"I *have* one, my lady," said Jack.

"Have you?" exclaimed her ladyship.

"The —— pooh! — I forget her name," said Jack, "I only bought her last night. Pooh! — something beginning with an S."

"An S!" said her ladyship.

"An S!" said Fanny, looking at Brag with an interest such as she would have felt if her eyes had rested upon his amiable mother's tortoiseshell cat.

"Yes," said Jack, "an S, and no mistake: and there she is, looking uncommon nice — all regular."

"That," said Lady Lavinia — "that is Captain — what's the man's name, Fanny, who was

so famous last year for wearing yellow boots?
—Captain—Chipstead.”

“ That ’s he,” said Jack.

“ She is called ‘The Psyche,’ ” said her ladyship.

“ Well,” said Brag, “ I hinted as much.”

“ Oh ! I see,” said her ladyship ; — “ you are so droll, it ’s quite delightful ! Psyche with an S—ha, ha !—how odd you are ! And you have bought her ? ”

“ Out and out,” said Jack.

This certainly was not the fact ; but the moment her ladyship expressed her wish that he should have a yacht, her desire, combined with his own wish to qualify for the Club, determined him. What she had discovered so exceedingly droll in his mode of spelling Psyche, Jack could not make out ; he naturally thinking—knowing nothing, of his own knowledge, of the lovely lively lady with the papilionaceous wings, that her name was written as it sounded, and being no more inclined to favour her with the letter P at its beginning, than he

would have been to indulge Ptolemy or a ptarmigan with a similar favour.

“ She is a very pretty yacht,” said Fanny.

“ Delighted to hear you say so,” said Jack.

“ What is her complement ?” asked Lady Lavinia.

“ What ! Miss Fanny’s compliment ?” said Jack — “ it ’s everything to me !” — and he looked expressively.

“ No,” said Lady Lavinia, “ Psyche’s complement.”

“ Ah !” said Jack, “ that ’s what I meant — Miss H’s compliment to Psyche.”

“ Oh, you *are* so droll !” said her ladyship, resolved to give her new lion or tiger a credit to which certainly he had no claim whatever : “ how many have you ?”

“ What !” said Jack, wholly at a loss to answer a question, of the purport of which he had not the slightest earthly comprehension — “ eh ! how many what ?”

“ Men, my aunt means,” said Fanny.

“ Men,” said Jack ; “ oh, only my own man,

my butler, and two or three livery servants, and my grooms."

"Well, you certainly are the most comical creature in the world!" said Lady Lavinia; "you *will* misunderstand everything one says: so odd — isn't he, Fanny? What number of men have you for your yacht? There now, you can't make a joke of *that*."

"Oh, the yacht!" said Jack; "why, to tell you the truth, my lady, till Wagley comes back I can't exactly say: he has what he calls the selling of her; and — so I put it all into Wagley's hands; and he will manage it all, smack smooth, and no mistake."

"He is a nice young man," said Lady Lavinia, sighing, "but he hasn't a bit of sentiment about him."

"Indeed!" said Jack, not in the least understanding what her ladyship meant, "that's a very sad business."

"I don't care about it," said her ladyship, "because I don't feel that sort of interest in him which genius, or talent, or even eccentricity excites in my mind. He is a distant con-

nexion of mine, and therefore I cherish him, although, as I tell him, he is horridly ungal-lant about his yacht. I think when 'The Psyche' is in commission, her master will not be so cross."

"I'm sure," said Jack, "I shall be happy to lend her to your ladyship whenever you and Miss Fanny like to go out in her."

"Oh!" said Fanny, "that's worse than Lord Wagley:—what will the sail be without *your* society, Mr. Brag?"

"You are uncommon kind," said Jack.

"I only speak for my aunt," said Fanny.

"My dear child," said Lady Lavinia, "I can speak for myself, thank you!—Have you been long on the turf, Mr. Brag?"

"Ever since my father was put under it, ma'am," said Jack: "but I think I shall give it up now, marry, and settle—that's the plan, and no mistake."

"Most rationally resolved," said her ladyship.

"There's only one hitch, my lady," said Jack—"I must get some other body's consent as well as my own"

“I should think *that* no difficulty,” said Lady Lavinia.

“You are very good, my lady,” said Jack, looking silly and shy, and feeling sure that he had made a regular hit.

“For *my* part,” said Lady Lavinia, “I believe I am not a fair judge of the comforts and blessings of a married life, for never certainly had woman so happy a lot. My poor Henry was certainly one of the kindest of husbands! Our felicity was destroyed in the third year of our union by his untimely death. I believe—dear Fanny does not recollect him—I believe there never was a happier couple. Fanny dear, go into the drawing-room, and show it to Mr. Brag?”

Jack, who, like his friend Lord Wagley, had not a bit of sentiment about him, could by no means enter into the sort of feeling exhibited by Lady Lavinia towards the memory of her departed husband, who had been deposited in the family vault of all the Orlebars for the last fourteen years; but “in course,” as he would have said, without knowing, or even guessing

what it was he was going to see, he followed the fair Fanny into the room, in which was deposited an ebony case, the doors of which she slowly opened, and exhibited to his sight the portrait of a stout, fresh-coloured young man, dressed in the uniform of some volunteer corps of cavalry, wearing flashes, with a profusion of well-powdered hair fluttering in the breeze, as he stood without his hat, leaning his left arm on the saddle of his horse, which pawed the ground behind him,—his right hand resting on the hilt of his sword.

Jack looked at it. Fanny observed that it was considered a good likeness. Jack made a little noise between a hem and a grunt, took out his pocket-handkerchief, blew his nose;—Fanny shut up the case.

“Well,” said Lady Lavinia, as he returned to the garden, “you have seen it.”

“Yes, my lady,” said Jack — “fine man. Do you happen to recollect where he got that bright bay which he is a leaning upon? It’s as like one that I have got down at my little place in Surrey, as one pea to another.”

“No, Mr. Brag,” said her ladyship, “I recollect nothing but my own sad loss ; the accessories to the likeness have no interest for me.”

“The gentleman was in the army,” said Jack, who was terribly puzzled what to say, and above all felt the greatest difficulty in pronouncing the name of the dear departed, seeing that it was by no means euphonic. What he *had* said, however, was fatal to his own tranquillity for the next hour or two.

Lady Lavinia had fallen in love with Mr. Newbiggen when she was eighteen or nineteen, he being the son of a most respectable man, who kept what is called “an everything shop” in a fashionable watering-place at which her ladyship and her noble father happened to be staying.

This attachment, which at the first blush certainly seems as little sentimental as may be, was struggled with, by the gentle Lavinia, in vain. Her efforts to conquer it brought on a severe illness ; and a confession made to her indulgent parent the Earl of Scredington, whose only child she was, obtained from him his

sanction to the match, under certain circumstances, and upon certain conditions.

The first condition was, that Mr. Newbiggen the elder should retire from trade, and establish himself as a private gentleman in some part of England, as far distant as possible from his then residence, and that no intercourse was to be allowed between the families after the marriage: this was a hard and heart-breaking stipulation for Henry's mother; however, his lordship made a considerable pecuniary sacrifice to induce the old folks to accede to it, and they accordingly retired from business into Yorkshire.

The next condition was, that as Mr. Newbiggen's name would devolve upon Lady Lavinia Orlebar, and be thus connected for ever with that highly honourable house, he should forthwith repair to London, and put Clarendieux, or some of his co-mates in arms, in possession of whatever family facts or anecdotes he could collect, in order that, previous to the marriage, he might get his genealogy properly arranged to meet the public eye, so as

to give a weight and respectability to the name of Newbiggen, which it appeared very considerably to want. These stipulations having been complied with, Lord Scredington got Mr. Newbiggen into the volunteer cavalry of his own county, and converted him into a captain with the least possible delay: it was in the uniform of this rank he had been painted, and the picture and the pedigree were the constant subjects of Lady Lavinia's conversation with every fresh acquaintance she made. The merits and amiability of her lost Henry were never rehearsed without an immediate reference to his family tree, a perusal of which would unquestionably establish the antiquity and aristocracy of his family, and put at rest at once any hints or innuendoes of an inferiority disparaging to the Orlebars.

“Perhaps, Mr. Brag,” said her ladyship, “as you are so good as to take an interest in our family affairs, you would like to look at Mr. Newbiggen's tree? Fanny dear, open the box, and let Mr. Brag see it; it is most beau-

tifully got up, and does infinite credit to the Heralds' College."

Jack's ideas were now greatly confused. What Mr. Newbiggen's tree was, puzzled him greatly; and when he saw the ample parchment removed from its resting-place, his perplexity was very little reduced.

Butler says, "A herald calls himself a king, because he has authority to hang, draw, and quarter — arms: for, assuming a jurisdiction over the distributive titles of honour, as far as words extend, he gives himself as great a latitude that way, as other magistrates use to do where they have authority, and would enlarge it as far as they can. It is true he can make no lords, nor knights, of himself, *but as many squires and gentlemen as he pleases, and adopt them into what family they have a mind.*

"His dominions abound with all sorts of cattle, fish, and fowl, and all manner of manufactures, besides whole fields of gold and silver, which he magnificently bestows upon his followers. The language he uses is barbarous, as

being but a dialect of pedlar's French, or the Egyptian, though of a loftier sound, and in its propriety affecting brevity, as the other does verbosity.

“ His business is like that of all the schools,—to make plain things hard with perplexed methods and insignificant terms, and then appear learned in making them plain again. He professes arms,—not for war, but for ornament; and yet makes the basest things in the world weapons of worshipful bearings. He is wiser than the fellow who sold his ass and kept the shadow for his own use, for he sells the shadow (that is, the picture) and keeps the ass himself. His chief province is at funerals, where he commands in chief, marshals the *tristitiæ irritamenta*, and, like a gentleman-sewer to the worms, serves up the feast with all punctual formality. He is a kind of necromancer, and can raise the dead out of their graves, and make them marry and give birth to people of whom they never even heard in their lifetime.

“ His coat is like the king of Spain's dominions,—all skirts, and hangs as loose about

him ; and his neck is the waist, like the picture of Nobody, with his breeches fastened to his collar. He will sell the head, or the single joint of a beast, or fowl, as dear as the whole body—like a pig's head in Bartholomew Fair ; and after, put off the rest to his customers at the same rate. His arms, being utterly out of use in war since guns came up, have been translated to dishes and cups, as the ancients used their precious stones, according to the poet, '*Gemmas ad pocula transfert à gladiis,*' and since are like to decay every day more and more, for since he gave citizens coats of arms, gentlemen have made bold to take their letters of mark by way of reprisal. The hangman has a recipe to mar all his work in a moment ; for, by nailing the wrong end of a 'scutcheon upwards upon a gibbet, all the honour and gentility extinguishes of itself, like a candle that is held with the flame downwards. Other arms are made for the spilling of blood ; but his only purify and cleanse it, like scurvy-grass ; for a small dose taken by his prescription, will refine that which is as base and gross as bull's blood,

(which the Athenians used to poison withal) to any degree of purity."

Butler's description is somewhat elaborated, and in no small degree illiberal in its reflections upon the College: but if he could have seen the genealogy of the deceased Mr. Newbiggen, whatever he might have found to justify some part of his observations, he could not have failed to admire the mingled boldness and ingenuity with which it had been manufactured.

Jack glanced his eye over the parchment, and was going to make some particularly absurd remark, when Lady Lavinia desired Fanny to give him "the papers" to read.

"I should like you to look over them," said her ladyship. "Fanny dear, let us leave Mr. Brag for a little;—and then we will go in to luncheon."

Saying which, the ladies retired; Lady Lavinia affecting to be greatly affected, in order to give our hero the opportunity of informing himself with respect to the ancestry of her late husband, a course which, as has already been

observed, she invariably adopted, in order to confute and confound any reports—which mischievous people were but too ready to circulate—tending to disparage the respectability of Mr. Newbiggen, or, what she more disliked,—misrepresent the character of her affection for him, from which their union resulted.

Brag opened the sort of MS. pamphlet which had been delivered to him ; but he certainly did not think of its contents. His eyes rested on the *Psyche*, and his thoughts reverted to the statement he had made, as regarded its purchase, to Lady Lavinia—then to the advantages to be derived from her patronage—then the possibility of his election into the Club ;—in short, he felt himself upon the edge of a precipice,—he must either jump boldly, clear his present difficulties, and land upon higher ground ;—or “ be for ever fall’n,” and he felt, above all, that he had no time to lose.

Having turned all his own personal affairs in his mind, he proceeded to read the honourable record which he held in his hand.

NEWBIGGEN of BUMBLESFORD.



This ancient and honourable family is descended from Hugo de Hoaques, one of the followers of King William the Conqueror, who married, on the 19th of August 1058, Hermengilda, Duchess of Coutance, daughter of Reginald d'Evreux, by Margaret, great-niece of the Emperor Charlemagne.

After the Conquest we find the family of de Hoaques settled in Kent.

Stephen de Hoaques, of Tenterden, married, March the 6th, 1108, Emma, daughter of Sir Trystram Dummer, by Florence, daughter and

co-heiress of Robert Chittenden, who was afterwards knighted by King Henry the First, on the 4th of September 1119, in memory of the great services he had rendered to his late queen Matilda, daughter of Malcolm king of Scotland, who died on the 1st of the preceding May.

Stephen had seventeen children by his wife, nine of whom survived him. He died April 1, 1151, having been married forty-three years. He was succeeded by

Stephen de Hoaques, who assumed the name of Hoaxley, of Tenterden, born March 4, 1109. He married Alice, daughter of Sir Walter Fysheton, of Cromlie in the county of Huntingdon ; and by her, who died July 7, 1162, he had

Margaret, married to Sir Hugh Gamstock, afterwards created Baron Gamstock, who died without issue.

Of the younger branches of the family of Hoaques there are no distinct records. One son, it is believed, was educated for the church, became a cardinal, and was proposed for the Tiara ; another rose to great eminence in the

state; and the youngest sister went to France, where she espoused a French nobleman of the highest rank.

Stephen Hoaxley survived his wife Alice but three years, having deceased on the 9th of March 1165. On his death, it appears that the family estates at Tenterden were sold; for in the year 1169 we find the ancient manor-house of Homebag, or Hommbug, in the possession of Stephen Newcome, of whose genealogy a long account is given by Lyall, in his "Researches." His wife was great-great-great-grand-daughter of Owen Glmdrwg, a near relation of Eglmd, who was some time Prince of Powys.

By this lady Mr. Newcome had a numerous family, who subsequently quitted Kent, and settled in the neighbourhood of Leicester. His third son was created a baron, in the year 1238, by Henry the Third, whose queen stood sponsor to his only daughter, Eleanor, who was named after her illustrious godmother. She was born November 11, 1240; and married, May 6, 1259, Wynkin de Nethersole, to whom

her large fortune devolved, upon the death of her father, on the 8th of August 1271.

The Lady de Nethersole survived her husband, and married a second time, on the 12th of March 1279, the first-cousin of her former husband,—Bertram de Nethersole, by whom she had several children. This branch of the family intermarried with the Mowbrays, Herrings, Russells, Spencers, Fitzwalters, Courtenays, and various other noble houses.

In the reign of George the Second the family of the Nethersoles were possessed of considerable landed property in Gloucestershire, of which county Mr. Isaac Nethersole was foreman of the grand jury in the year 1759. His daughter Anne, by Margaret Alicia, first-cousin to the Honourable Patrick O'Callaghan, of Sculduddery in the county of Tipperary, married, June 9th, 1754, Sir Thomas Waltham, knight and alderman of the city of London, who had by her,

Thomas,—Died young :

Anne,—Born May 1762 ;—married, December 21, 1778, John Hogmore, of Dilberry, in

the county of Gloucester, who, dying, bequeathed his paternal estates to his nephew George Stamford Bamford Hogmore, Esq.; from whom a portion of them descended, by purchase, to the present owner, Isaac John Newbiggen, of Bumblesford, Esq. now the representative of that respectable and ancient family.

Mr. Newbiggen married, July 7, 1779, Miss Margaret Tibbs, of a very ancient and highly honourable family in Cumberland, by whom he has issue,—

Henry Theophilus Newbiggen, born May 12, 1784, a captain in the Flimsy volunteer corps of cavalry, a vestryman of the parish of Gammonby, and one of the trustees of the Puddlesford turnpike-road; married, February 14, 1810, the Lady Lavinia Anne Elizabeth Catharine Jemisseta Orlebar, only surviving daughter of the Right Honourable Francis John Earl of Scredington, by whom he has no issue.

ARMS. Sa. a fesse engrailed Or, between three Coffee-biggens proper.

CREST. The sun in splendour, rising from clouds, all ppr.

MOTTO. "*Begin anew.*"

QUARTERINGS.

FYSHETON.	DUMMER.
GAMSTOCK.	GLMDRWG.
HOWARD.	BOTELER.
RUSSELL.	DE COURCY.
SPENCER.	MONTMORENCI.
COURTENAY.	FITZALLAN.
MURRAY.	NETHERSOLE.
CAMPBELL.	TIBBS.
PERCY.	GAMMON.

Country Seats—Bumblesford Grange, Yorkshire. Newbiggen House, Kent.

Town Residence—Lower Brook Street.

Jack had scarcely finished this valuable specimen of heraldic research, brought to such an obvious and satisfactory conclusion, before the ladies returned to summon him to luncheon, where, as the after-part of the day is destined to be rather eventful to him, we will leave him, and begin a fresh chapter for fresh occurrences.

CHAPTER IV.

It was late before Lord Wagley returned from his cruise. He had been to Southampton; and Brag was anxiously awaiting his arrival to talk over the affair of the yacht, when, as he came ashore, he beheld his lordship accompanied in his boat by a stranger. Under the peculiar circumstances in which he was placed, every new-comer awakened his apprehensions lest something should *éclater* which might militate against his election into the Club, now rendered an object of first-rate importance to him by the expression of Lady Lavinia's wishes regarding "The Psyche."

The boat touched the sloping *chaussée*, and my lord leaped on shore: the stranger followed. His lordship hailed Jack in his usual friendly and familiar manner—so far all was right, and "no mistake." He next introduced

the stranger to him with a greater air of *empressement* than appeared to Jack absolutely necessary: the manner implied that they would become extremely intimate, — or rather that circumstances somehow connected their fates, the true meaning and extent of which Mr. Brag could not clearly comprehend.

“My dear Brag,” said his lordship, “this is Mr. Leveret, my solicitor and friend.”

Jack bowed in his best fashion, but there was something in the expression of the new-comer’s countenance which puzzled him.

“His visit,” continued his lordship, “is one which mingles business with pleasure. He tells me that some infernal farmer down at that place Wigglesford, or Wagglesford, or whatever it is called, has given notice of action about our trespassing in the steeple-chase, and that you, like myself, are one of the defendants: — have you heard of it before?”

“Heard of it!” said Jack; “all I heard of it was, that a queer-looking chap came into one of my apartments at the hotel at Eastbourne, and gave me a long slip of paper look-

ing like an overgrown cheque, and told me something about a trespass; in course, I took it: and when I asked him what next I was to do, he told me to put it in my pocket, which accordingly I did, and never meant to trouble my head about it any more one way or another, and no mistake."

"It is fortunate," said Mr. Leveret, "that I have run down to see his lordship upon the point: there are seven defendants included in the action, and whatever may be the result, you, sir, should be at least put upon a footing with the others."

"In course," said Jack: "what must I do then?"

"In the first place," said Leveret, "we must put in an appearance; but that, such is the benign character of the English law, would have been done for you by a fiction, which would, involuntarily on your part, carry you forward in the case; but as I am here, if you will tell me whom your professional advisers are, I can communicate with them, and make the thing perfectly easy."

“ I have no professional adviser,” said Jack, “ except Mr. Grout, my apothecary, and I haven’t much need of *him*. I find air and exercise ——”

“ You misunderstand me, sir,” said Leveret — “ I mean a legal adviser.”

“ I never had such a thing in my life,” said Jack, “ and don’t know where to find one.”

“ Put your affairs into Leveret’s hands,” said Lord Wagley ; “ you will find him a man of honour, and a most agreeable companion : his advice upon any point, whether professional or not, is invaluable.”

“ Your lordship does me too much honour,” said Leveret. “ I am sure I shall be extremely happy to do anything in *my* power to serve any friend of your lordship’s.”

“ In course I shall be too happy,” said Jack ; “ so, if you please, we’ll consider that settled.”

Leveret bowed again.

“ Shall we be very considerably smashed,” said Lord Wagley, “ in this absurd business?”

“ It is impossible at present, my lord,” said Leveret, “ to judge how things will turn out.

A verdict against us, I look upon to be inevitable. But I am told that the plaintiff, Grindlestone, has taken up the matter not half so much upon the ground of the trespass, as because the newspapers stated the property trespassed on, to belong to Mr. Brag. This has nettled him; besides, he has a wife, who has taken offence at something which my new and excellent friend has done, and who, as I hear, has worried him into this action accordingly."

"That's just it," said Jack; "the female sex are always at the bottom of everything. I certainly *do* recollect her, at the time we were looking over the country thereabouts; and I suppose it was because I did not pay my compliments to her in a more—what you call—slap-up manner, that she got cantankerous."

"Why," said Leveret, smiling, "the story which I have heard, sir, does not impute any backwardness on *your* part. I have seen Messrs. Tapps, Tatlock, and Shackleton, of Pump Court, Temple,—at least Mr. Tatlock, who manages this case for the house,—and I really believe the whole thing originates in some petty spite."

“Petticoat spite, according to your version,” said Lord Wagley; “but don’t you think, Leveret, we might compromise the affair?”

“Compromise, my lord,” said Leveret, “is the last thing I should recommend: it is never satisfactory, even in the best of cases. A matter referred to arbitration, let it be decided how it may, convinces nobody — pleases nobody. No: I should say, let it go into Court: we shall retain Sir Frederick, Sir William, and two or three more of the best——”

“What! — to defend this thing?” said Lord Wagley.

“To be sure, my lord,” said Leveret. “We then fight them double-handed: by retaining the good ones, we not only get them ourselves, but hinder *them* from obtaining their services. We’ll give them the Attorney and Solicitor-General, if they choose to have them; but it is everything to nail the talent: — that’s it, my lord.”

“And what damages will they get?” said Lord Wagley.

“There’s no accounting for the fancies of

juries," said Leveret : — " may be twenty pounds — may be five hundred. In point of fact, the question is one simply of trespass, by which no positive mischief has been done, and therefore no special damages can be sought : it is a mere thing of right, and Mrs. Grindlestone, who sticks up for her husband's privileges, is, as I have already said, the great inciting cause of the proceeding."

Jack was by no means pleased with the pertinaciousness with which Mr. Leveret adhered to his opinion as to the share Mrs. Grindlestone had in the lawsuit, because he well recollected having been extremely civil, as he called it, to the lady, who was a remarkably pretty woman, free in her manner, and lively in her conversation ; but who, for that very reason, did not exactly admire the conduct which our little hero had been pleased to adopt in the course of the only dialogue which passed between them, and in which Jack had thought proper to suit the action to the word, and endeavour to make himself most particularly agreeable by a practical illustration of his tender feelings towards

her. Of this *tête-à-tête* Jack had never said one syllable to anybody; and, now that the animosity of the lady exhibited itself in so violent and revengeful a manner, he thought it quite as well to keep his secret, and endeavour to impress the minds of the lord and the lawyer with the notion that her anger had been excited rather by his neglect of *her* advances, than his own presumption and impertinence.

The conversation, as far as law was concerned, soon terminated. Jack was regularly put under Leveret's care, and with the appearance of dinner ended all farther discussion. Everything was *en train*; the matter was in Leveret's hands, and nothing could be better; and Jack, who, so long as he got rid of anything unpleasant at the moment, cared little for results, tried back upon the confident assertion of the clerk of Messrs. Tapps, Tatlock, and Shackleton, that he need not trouble himself any more about it; and out of this assurance, and the gaiety and ease with which his newly acquired acquaintance and councillor spoke of the business, he derived so

much satisfaction, that when the wine had twice or thrice circulated after dinner, he felt as light as air, and perfectly careless of consequences.

The moment he had acquired confidence enough to revert to his favourite — his engrossing topic, he resumed his observations on “The Psyche” — his desire to have a yacht — his special desire to have that particular yacht.

“Well,” said Lord Wagley, “nothing can come off more opportunely: Leveret knows all the circumstances of the case, and how I come to have the selling of her. If you like to have her, I’ll make it perfectly easy to you: you shall give me a bill at your own date; and I would not, I declare to you, press the thing, only I know she is a bargain; — in fact, a bank-note.”

“Your lordship is very good,” said Jack. “I own I don’t know much of yachting — but she looks a good-un; and I have more reasons than one for wishing to be — eh? — you know.”

“I understand,” said his lordship. “And now I tell you what — Leveret and you talk it

over to-morrow ; whatever *he* thinks fair about it, I agree to, now. He can act rather as a mutual friend than a lawyer,—and so—you settle it all between you : he knows what Chipstead gave for her, and the circumstances under which she is to be sold—so, there now—”

“ I shall be too happy to do anything in my power,” said Leveret, who was a remarkably gentlemanlike man, and evidently well-disposed towards his noble client and his curious guest.

“ I fancy,” said Lord Wagley, whose great object was to sell the yacht, “ ‘ The Psyche ’ will not be long without a mistress—eh, Brag ? You are always dangling, I see, at Lady Lavinia’s.”

“ Umph ! ” said Jack — “ I like that sort of society. Somehow she knows a great deal of one thing and another — and is uncommon good-natured to *me* : as for Miss Hastings, she is what I call a regular beauty, and no mistake.”

“ Yes,” said Lord Wagley, “ handsome enough, but poor, and over head and ears in love with an author, — one of her aunt’s lions, who writes poetry—‘ Sonnets to her Eyebrow,’—

and reads it to her, when he can find an opportunity. The Lady Lavinia likes to have him at her little parties, because he has got a name ; but she has expressed her opinion pretty clearly to Miss Fanny as to the nature of her acquaintance—talks first of his merits and accomplishments, then of his want of money and the precariousness of authorship, — prohibits her niece from entertaining anything but a platonic friendship for him, and then invites him, night after night, to recite poems and sing love-songs for the amusement of her visitors. Lady Lavinia herself has a large income ; but Fanny, who is a daughter of her only sister, who died young, and soon after her marriage, has but little : the whole bulk of the property went to the present Lord Scredington, who was a nephew of the late earl. My belief is,” added his lordship, “that Lady Lavinia, although she *is* my fifteenth cousin, or some such thing, would be nothing loth to become a wife again.”

“Yet,” said Jack, delighted with what he heard, “she talks a great deal of her *first*.”

“To be sure,” said his lordship; “she thinks, by showing how devoted she was to *him*, to induce somebody to be his successor. And now I’ll tell you what my further opinion is,—that she will change her name within three months of your possessing ‘The Psyche.’”

“I think she *has* a turn for marrying,” said Jack, who was putting his head into the trap which his two friends had set for him, as kindly as possible, “and I don’t know why she shouldn’t, — she’s a sensible, agreeable, creechur; and I think her little parties—at least the two nights I have been there—uncommon pleasant,—and no mistake.”

As the conversation proceeded, Jack warmed, and at last they went the length of drinking the health of the future mistress of “The Psyche,” accompanied with remarks and observations which settled the point, and unequivocally alluded to the individual lady; and this, and an expression of Lord Wagley’s decided conviction that Jack would be a member of the Yacht Club before he was a week older, sent him to bed perfectly happy, and utterly forget-

ful of everything disagreeable that had passed during the last month.

This may seem strange when the nature of these occurrences is taken into calculation ; but that which is stranger still, is the fact that, for once in his life, Jack was not entirely mistaken in the effect he had produced. Lady Lavinia really thought him a ‘fine man.’ She saw that he was not particularly learned, but she thought him vivacious and agreeable : such thoughts having gained possession of her mind, because, of the three days which had elapsed since he was first presented to her, two and a half had been devoted to her.

In the morning, Leveret and Mr. Brag had their final consultation on the subject of the yacht. They went on board : Jack poked about in every hole and corner, looked at every part of her with that sort of waggish curiosity which a monkey might be supposed to exhibit under similar circumstances. The captain, as Chipstead’s schipper was called, pointed out all her perfections, and expatiated upon her sailing qualities, all of which was, as

the reader may imagine, Greek to our hero ; who, nevertheless, was captivated with the accommodations she possessed, and which, while she was lying in the harbour as steady and as even upon her keel as Saint Paul's Cathedral on its foundations, seemed to him straight up, right down, and no mistake.

Four men and the captain would be a capital complement for her ; and the captain, who had been five years with Lord Flipflap before he engaged with Captain Chipstead, was a treasure and a host in himself. The thing was clearly settled ; a man once bitten with a fancy, has only to be cherished and encouraged a little, and he is sure to put into execution the most absurd possible project. A cat in a bowl, in the middle of a duck-pond, could not be more completely out of her element than Jack Brag in a yacht ; but the conceit, the ambition, and, above all, the hope of overcoming all obstacles by rising higher than he ever yet had attempted, confirmed him in the undertaking ; and having partaken of some luncheon which Lord Wagley had ordered to be prepared on

board, and having drunk success to yachting several times over, he pressed his kind friend Leveret's hand, in token of the conclusion of his bargain, and was put on shore at the "Fountain," owner of "The Psyche," for which he was to give a bill at two months for eight hundred pounds,—a circumstance not of the slightest earthly importance, because, as Lord Wagley had said the night before, and the captain and the attorney had repeated in the morning, she was as good as a bank-note for that money, the great struggle about her being, who was to possess her ; so that any day in the week he could dispose of her, and get abundance of thanks for sparing her.

Lord Wagley was out sailing ; indeed, his lordship appeared particularly anxious not to have any personal share in making the bargain. Accordingly, Jack and the lawyer whiled away time,—first by calling at Lady Lavinia's, and then climbing the hill by Northwood-Park Gate, and then, by strolling along the road towards Newport ; their conversation turning chiefly on nautical matters, upon which Mr. Leveret

was very little better informed than his client. Having concluded their excursion, they strolled back again, enquired at the turnpike about some shorter road homeward, and at last found themselves once more on the Parade.

There they met Lady Lavinia and Fanny, there Jack formally announced the purchase he had made, and there received her ladyship's compliments and congratulations on the event: there too they found Mr. Selwyn, the devoted admirer of Miss Hastings, and it took but a few moments to perceive that their affection was reciprocal: but, as has already been observed, the pretensions of the young author were rigidly discountenanced by Lady Lavinia, who, having besieged and implored him into being her visitor, had become most anxious to get rid of him without the *éclat* of dismissing a lover, and above all, without souring the temper of his muse, and probably inducing something from his pen which might make her uncomfortable for the rest of her life.

A shrewd old lady long since dead, once expressed her opinion to me that, in a worldly

point of view, it was much better to be feared than loved in society. That Selwyn was popular, and even beloved, there can be no doubt, but that with all his gentleness and gaiety, he possessed the power of making "the galled jade wince," is equally true; and although it is farthest from my thoughts to hint that any such character could be justly appropriated to Lady Lavinia Newbiggen, still she felt that she *had* weak points, and had no desire that her blots should be hit by so able a master. Thus she was poised between the fear of giving him offence, and wishing most devoutly that he would take it. To carry this point she had formed a scheme, which she eventually put into execution, with what success the reader will hereafter know.

In the course of four or five days, during which Jack, who had taken a great fancy to Leveret, and took his opinion upon every point, our hero, was actually put into possession of 'The Psyche,' in consideration of his acceptance. That he was not at present to be balloted for at the Club, arose from some re-

gulation as to the meeting of an adequate number of members, or some other reason, which Wagley most plausibly gave, his object merely being to dispose of the craft. Jack's dismay, however, when he found that the distinguished burgee which formed one of her chiefest ornaments while fluttering at her topmast head, was to be dowsed so soon as she ceased to be the property of Captain Chipstead, was great; and his nervousness when he went on board and, while looking over her sails with a nautical eye, which were bent for his inspection, felt the influence of her Pearl-like mainsail, even under the lee of the houses, was most remarkable.

Wagley had strenuously advised him to retain the captain and crew:—“couldn't do better.” This advice he implicitly followed, and proceeded to endeavour to elicit from this merman and his followers, what he ought farther to do.

“It depends greatly on gentlemen's fancies, sir,” said Bung, the captain: “some likes one thing, and some another. I suppose you'll take

longish trips, sir? she's as fine a sea-boat as ever swam;—lies like a duck on the water. "Yes," said Jack, "Yes, I shall go out and about like the others, you know,—all straight up, and right down,—and no mistake."

"What I mean is, sir," said Bung, (evidently a relation of the truly nautical Cowes family, the Corks,) "some gentlemen likes to have everything reg'lar ship-shape—just as one as if we was aboard of a man-o'-war. If you likes to have 'Psyche' kept in that manner,—all, as I calls it, slap-up,—these four men don't mind punishment:—they've got their Guernsey shirts all worked, you see, with her name upon them, as likewise upon their hats; and if she's to be handled like a king's-cutter, they don't value the 'cat' of a farden. Here, Bill, you come aft;—show the gentleman your frock."

Accordingly a regular fine-looking Vectan stepped up to Jack and exhibited to him his hat and striped frock, whereupon were worked in the one instance, and painted in the other,—the

letters P S Y C H E, the which exhibition astonished Jack not a little, it being the first time he had ascertained that such was the mode of spelling Mrs. Cupid's name,—a circumstance which might have been ascertained by any more observant person than Bung, inasmuch as Mr. Brag, after looking at the object before him, repeated in a tone sufficiently audible to have attracted 'ears polite,'—"Physic,—what the deuce does that mean?"

"I should in course," said Brag to his captain, "like to have her uncommon smart,—and all that; but I don't understand what you mean about the men not caring for the 'cat.'"

"What I mean, sir," said Bung, "is, that among the tip-toppers of our squadron, them as we call the moon-rakers, and angel-disturbers,—they keep up reg'lar navy discipline, and whenever a man gets intosticated in regard of liquor,—goes ashore without leave,—stays ashore after his leave is out, or does anything lubberly, they has him seized up to a grating, and gives him 'a couple of dozen!'"

“ A couple of dozen what ? ” said Jack.

“ Lashes, sir,” said Bung.

“ And do they stand it ? ” asked Jack.

“ It ’s all matter of agreement in the outset,” said Bung. “ It ’s a regular understood thing in a smart craft,—five pounds a flogging ;—that ’s the price, sir ; and some of the nobs here, as is what they thinks uncommon slap-up, stumps to the tune of two or three hundred a year a-piece, to support discipline : howsomever, here, in this bit of a thing, it arn’t likely we should never come to *that* ; only I mention it at first, because it ’s always considered in the wages.”

“ Bit of a thing ! ” muttered Jack, who felt, while he was beginning to get extremely uncomfortable on the deck of his yacht, himself scarcely second to Nelson, and ‘ The Psyche ’ not at all inferior to ‘ The Victory.’ “ No,—no,” said he, “ I shan’t want that sort of thing. I shall take it easy, and have no floggings.”

“ I suppose,” said Bung, “ you would like to get what ’s wanting in the way of stores aboard as soon as possible.”

“ Stores !” said Jack, and his mind reverted to the shop “ I ’d rather have moulds or wax.”

“ Beg pardon, sir,” said Bung — “ not such like as that ; your servant will bring them sort of things off, I dare say. No ; I ’ve just made out a bit of a list of some of the things we shall want :—

3 casks of beef.

3 do. pork.

6 bags biscuit.

3 barrels of beer.

2 firkins Irish butter.

200 fathom of inch and a-half rope.

1 small anchor, three and a-half cwt.

80 blocks, of sizes.

4 small barrels superfine tar.

15 bolts of best canvass.

And a few other little necessities ; such as four new oars and a mast for the boat : and then, sir, the copper is a little scraped under her counter, which will want looking after ; and some of the glasses in the skylights is damaged ; and I think, sir, it would be as well to tell the

carpenter to run his eye along the bowsprit, I'm not quite sure that it isn't sprung. I've looked at it myself, and so has Jim; but it's best to be all right. We had a jolly good bump against a lubberly West-Indiaman — pitched right into her bows—the last time the captain was out."

"Why," said Jack, rattling the few shillings which were in his pockets, as if they were the more endeared to him on account of the departure of so many of their associates, "that seems a good deal, but I suppose you know best."

"It's all necessary, sir, you may rely upon it," said Bung. "We want some slops sadly."

"What!" said Jack, "besides the beer?"

"Beer won't keep men warm, sir," said Bung.

"Oh, no, in course," said Jack; "when it is cold they shall have whatever they want."

"It's clothes I mean, sir," said Bung: "and about spirits, sir — will your servant sarve out—or how?"

"Oh, yes," said Jack, "that will be best."

"Just as you please, sir," said Bung. "The

captain used to send forward what was wanted, under my care : — but just as you please.”

“ I ’ll go down stairs,” said Jack, “ and look about me——”

“ Here, Jim,” cried the captain — “ are you there ? — the gentleman is going below.”

And down he went, in a sort of mist and maze, caused by the accumulation of expense and difficulty for which he was in no way prepared, and which completely upset the wisdom of the French proverb, which says, “ *Ce n’est que le premier pas qui coute.*”

Jack’s great object in what he called “ going down stairs ” was, to be left for a few minutes to his own reflections, which, however, were anything but agreeable. A yacht in the abstract was a very charming thing, and the absolute necessity of possessing one, before he could become associated club-wise with Lord Wagley and his friends, rendered it most of all desirable ; but he saw in a moment that he had quite mistaken and miscalculated the whole affair. Nor did the preparations so anxiously suggested by Bung, — involving, as they evidently did, the

possibility of lengthened excursions,—seem in the slightest degree more agreeable to his imagination. Bung, however, followed him below, and made sundry remarks upon the hinges of a door which wanted mending, and the handles of some drawers which required altering ; nor did he leave him until Brag, resolved to enjoy the privilege of command for which he had paid, or was to pay, so dearly, dismissed him, and abandoned himself to the enjoyment of just as much motion, produced by the displayed mainsail, as made his head ache, without his exactly finding out why, and the delights of the fragrance of the best possible pitch and tar with which certain seams in the neighbourhood of the cabin had been recently payed.

Jack threw himself upon his crimson moreen cushions, and voted himself a rash enterprising hero ; but as the yacht would always fetch her price, and as Lady Lavinia had really—for so it was—made an unequivocal demonstration of regard for him, in which very curious prepossession she was mightily encouraged by Lord

Wagley, and even by Fanny Hastings, who looked to anything like a matrimonial engagement for her aunt as a certain precursor of her own union with her talented, not rich, lover, the literary man ;—he considered himself, under the peculiar circumstances in which he had contrived to place himself, fully justified in making his present experiment.

As the new owner of “The Psyche” was casting his eyes around the close-smelling box in which he was revelling, they suddenly rested upon a book. Jack was no great reader, but his anxiety was awakened to know what work it could be that had been left in his possession : he poked across the cabin, and secured the treasure, and found it to be the Code of Signals belonging to *the* Club—or squadron, as it has since been called—of which he was so anxious to become a member. Jack, who was cunning enough to know that he could not use these signals until he had received the accolade, thought it nevertheless a great object to secure the book, so as to inform himself of what was going on when the squadron was

telegraphing; accordingly he resolved upon making extracts into his own pocket-book, leaving the inestimable treasure itself untouched; and accordingly he began without loss of time to transcribe, at random, such as he thought most interesting.

No.

208. "Send some cutlets on board."

Do. (With a gun.)—"And potatoes."

211. "The last snuff is not good."

214. "Send Hawkesly's mixture."

506. "Lemons."

507. "Punishment."

692. "The enemy is in sight."

693. "Get dinner at ——"

(Followed by numeral for hour.)

1264. "Tarts from Southampton."

—— (With two balls from the Club-house post.)—"Champagne."

(Numeral for bottles.)

1271. "How d'ye do?"

1272. "Pretty well, I thank you."

Do. (With a gun.)—"How are *you*?"

No.

1308. "Ladies are sick ; send off large boat."

1309. "Aye, aye !"

NIGHT SIGNALS.

Two guns, and a } "We are becalmed."
light at gaff.

A blue light, and } "Dear me !—you don't say so?"
three guns in
quick succession }
through the Club-
house rails.

One gun, and } "Don't wait dinner ; we can't
two lights at top- }
mast head. get back."

One gun, and a } "We don't mean it."
rocket from Club- }
house.

One gun, and two } "Send off boat-cloaks, and
rockets. umbrellas."

One gun through } "Aye, aye !"
club-house rails.

Jack had scarcely made these few interesting and important extracts before he heard his captain coming, what he called, "down stairs." He threw down the mystic volume, huddled

his memoranda into his pocket, and feigned sleep —

—————“ the certain knot of peace ;
The baiting-place of wit, the balm of woe ;
The poor man's wealth, the prisoner's release ;
Th' indifferent judge between the high and low ”—

in order to impress Bung with an idea of the perfect at-home-ishness which he felt in his *own* yacht.

Bung came to announce that the boat was alongside, and to enquire whether he would like to go ashore ; to which the newly-installed lord and master of the barque replied in the affirmative, gladly seizing the proffered opportunity of releasing himself from the growing qualmishness which oppressed him, not of himself having ascertained what specific instructions he was required to give, or what special order to make, in order to procure his transportation to *terra firma*.

As Jack stepped over the side, which he did with considerable apprehension, and just as he had bumped himself, first on the gunwale, secondly on one of the thwarts, and

thirdly and lastly into the stern-sheets of the boat, Bung enquired whether he was to order the few little items which he had mentioned as being essentially necessary to the nautical existence of "The Psyche," and received from Brag his full authority to do so,—inasmuch as, if they could not be done without, what was to be done but have them. The splendid manner in which these instructions were given, struck awe and gratitude into the hearts and minds of the two pullers, who touched their hats as Jack stepped on shore, "just all as one" as if he had been an admiral: Jack, however, felt a pang in the midst of all this elevation. They pulled to the landing-place by the flag-staff at the end of the Parade, farthest from the Castle, instead of to the sloping *chaussée* close to it, —that being sacred to the use of the members of the Club.

This little drawback, however, would be got over in a few days, and Jack looked forward to the assumption of the uniform, which he had ordered three days before, as a matter of certainty; and with this prospect before him, lead-

ing as it did to the accomplishment of his great project with regard to Lady Lavinia, he plunged at once into the expenses and extravagances which appeared likely in the end to work his destruction. Jack, however, possessed a certain degree of that sort of self-preservative prudence which closely resembled cunning; and while he was playing this game, living upon the means he still possessed, and purchasing, upon the credit of his acceptances, property which he was made to believe would fetch its price after it had served his turn, he came to a resolution not upon any account to trench upon the three hundred pounds which Salmon had paid into his banker's; he having ascertained the fact of such payment having been made, by a letter of enquiry upon the subject addressed to the firm.

At this juncture, and while Jack is waiting to get *Psyche* in order, — and while Selwyn, the gentle and the witty, is urging his suit with Fanny Hastings, — and Lord Wagley is preparing to soften Jack's fall with respect to the Club, the reader may not dislike to know the result of the "journey to London," effected by

the Thespians and Salmons on the day of Jack's hurried departure from Lewes.

As they proceeded, the gloom and sullenness of the bride did by no means abate ; neither did Mr. Salmon's apprehensions with regard to a collision between the lady *within*, and the lady *without*, in any degree subside, inasmuch as the only subject upon which his wife spoke with anything like common sociability was that of the mutton-chops at Godstone.

The Fates, however, seemed to frown even more severely than the fair ; for before they had reached East Grinstead, the sky, erst blue and beautiful, was suddenly overcast with heavy clouds, which in a very short time evinced the strongest disposition to "pour down hail:" the wind rose, and blowing strong from the northward, drifted the heavy torrent right in their teeth, and in a very short time drenched Titsy, J. S. and every other object animate or inanimate which was exposed to its influence on the uttermost side of the coach.

That these copious tributes had a tendency to cool the bride's temper, or wash from the

tablets of her mind the sorrows and the sense of injury with which they were so fatally inscribed, the reader cannot imagine: on the contrary, as each succeeding fold of her ample drapery became susceptible of the moisture, she became proportionably more irritable. The philosophers tell us that water thrown on fire gives it additional power, and, sure enough, by the time they *did* reach East Grinstead she was in a state of excitement hardly to be described.

Jem thought, in his own mind, that this would be a good opportunity to persuade her, as Falstaff says to Bardolph, to “lay out,” and descending from her exaltation, order a “po-chay” to town: but he did not dare to make the proposition, because Titsy suggested to *him* that, as there were only two men inside besides the ladies,—little did she think who they were,—there could be no doubt that one of them, “specially the little one, for he was so genteel,” would offer to give up his seat to *her*. The bare possibility of such a thing put Salmon into a fever; not that his wife’s eye, unaccustomed to the rougeing, powdering, lip-

salving, eyebrowing, and all concomitant stage tricks, was likely to recognise as the lovely bright-eyed Desdemona of the preceding evening, the sallow little woman who, unlaced, unplaited, unpainted, and packed up for travelling, in a plaid cloak, and huge shawl, looked as unlike either what Mrs. Salmon had seen in the street of Lewes, or on the stage of the theatre, as—no matter what—the simile is difficult,—the parallel might be dangerous.

While the horses were being changed, neither of the gentlemen “insides” got out; nor did they evince either pity or compassion for the saturated sufferer, who was not backward in reminding them of her presence by stamping with her feet on the boot in order to keep up the circulation, producing a noise which must have sensibly reminded them of the evidences of impatience so frequently afforded by the gods in the galleries.

The weather cleared a little as they proceeded; but the gleams of sunshine, like those of hope to other sufferers, were but transient, and before they actually reached Godstone it had

resumed its wonted severity. It was here that Salmon felt determined to assume the command, and hire a 'pochay,' as he called it; and when the coach drove up to the door, before his better half had even commenced her descent, he enquired if such a thing could be had: the answer was in the negative, all their horses were out, and no less than two parties were staying in the house from their inability to forward them.

This discussion, however, was overheard by Mr. Teeardeyell and his shadow, who nearly annihilated Salmon by telling him that they were about to leave the coach there, in order to go across to a friend's house near Reigate, where they were expected at dinner, and that therefore their two places would be quite at his service and that of the lady.

To use Mr. Salmon's own description of his feelings at hearing this announcement, you might have knocked him down with a feather. His wife and Molly Hogg in the same coach,—two fighting-cocks in a sack could not prove more formidable companions: however, there was no

help for it ; and accordingly Salmon handed his precious charge into the parlour, where *the* long-desired chops, and “ something hot,” were on the instant produced, in order to assuage the angered feelings of the gentle Titsy.

To Salmon’s great joy, neither of the ladies in the coach got out ; they fell to, upon their well flattened sandwiches, and were assisted in their dirt-devouring pursuit by their companions, who stood at the door and partook of the bounty of *la belle Marie*. For the benefit of the house, they borrowed a tumbler of the waiter, one of the gentlemen drank a little water, and the other lighted his cigar by the kitchen fire. While all this was going on, and Mr. and Mrs. Salmon were regaling, Jem’s eyes were constantly fixed on the coach ; and, as he saw his wife replenishing her glass with strong ale, he felt his heart sink from apprehension of the result.

“ You don’t eat, Mr. S.” said the lady : “ left your appetite behind you, I suppose,—in the playhouse, most likely ?”

“ I *do* eat,” said Salmon.

“Not as you did coming down,” replied the lady. “Them as is in love never eats.”

This by way of prelude to the performance was complete; and when the coachman put his head into the room, with the usual “*Now, sir, if you please,*” the summons sounded worse in Mr. Salmon’s ears, than the Clown’s invitation to Barnardine to come down and be hanged; he fidgetted, and shuffled. “If,” thought he, “I could say one word by way of preparation to Miss H. not to mind her,—not to speak; but how can I? what is to be done?” the waiter came into the room to be paid, else he would have feigned going out to pay him. “Come, sir, if *you please,*” was repeated; when, just as they were obeying the second appeal, Mr. Teeardeyell looked in and said, “Come, sir, you are keeping the stage waiting;” at the same moment holding up his finger so as to attract Salmon’s attention.

“Dropped one of my gloves,” said Salmon, turning back to affect to look for it. This *ruse* succeeded. Teeardeyell seized the moment, “All’s right inside,—no fear,—there’s nobody

in the coach whom *you* know, and remember you know nobody."

This mysterious counsel was evidently well meant, and was accordingly received with a look of gratitude. Fortified by this, Salmon saw with comparative satisfaction the waiter and chambermaid assisting to squeeze his wife into the coach; and as soon as that important operation was performed, he stepped in after her.

"Please ma'am," said Mrs. Salmon to her *vis-à-vis*, "will it be agreeable for you just to put your other leg outside o' mine? Thank ye, ma'am;—shocking bad day. I'm all in a muck, just as if I had been sitting in a washing-tub the whole of the morning."

Jem did not hear much of this, so completely was he astounded with what he saw. Mrs. Hogg sat opposite to Mrs. Salmon. According to Mr. Teeardeyell's direction, he took no notice of *her*, nor did she acknowledge *him*; and, as Mrs. Salmon had never seen her, all went well: but opposite to Jem sat a little crumped-up woman, apparently sixty, wearing a pair of

green glasses, who was speedily described by Mrs. Hogg as a French lady "just landed at Brighton from Dieppe, who had come on a visit to her, who had never been in England before, and spoke no English; which," continued the matron, "is very awkward, because I *speak no* French; so I am taking her to London, to a brother of mine, where the whole family are excellent French scholars, and she will be quite comfortable."

Salmon had seen Miss Hogg get into the coach with her mamma, and her mamma was there still, and nobody in the shape of woman had left the carriage during their journey; but so plausibly did the exemplary lady tell the history of the Frenchwoman, and so perfectly did his opposite neighbour look the part, that James was perfectly puzzled: nor would he have been satisfied of the beauty of the fiction and the skill of Miss H., if he had not been made aware of her identity by one or two of those little nudges which are sometimes given and received by travellers, in what are called public conveyances, in the most private man-

ner. He was soon satisfied that Mary *was* there, and acting as well as ever she did in her life.

Nothing occurred to mar the serenity of the journey ; indeed, Mrs. Salmon, overpowered by the "heavy wet" which she had taken within and without, sank into an agreeable slumber, which afforded her affectionate husband an opportunity of entering into a whispered explanation of his regrets and agony at what had taken place, which was gradually warming into an agreeable interchange of soft things, when he was all at once checked in his eloquence by Mrs. Hogg's saying "Fox," in the loudest tone and with marked emphasis, meaning thereby to convey to her friends in one of the shortest possible monosyllables her suspicion that Mrs. Salmon was not quite so fast asleep as she pretended to be.

Her apprehensions, however, were ill-founded ; nor did she awake from her repose, except for a few moments while they were changing the horses at Croydon, until, having arrived at the "Elephant and Castle," it became necessary

that the *companions* should separate,—Mr. and Mrs. Salmon going by the “City Branch,” and the ladies proceeding in the coach to what is called, by the truly elegant, the “West End.” Here the affair had terminated happily, the scheme had succeeded, and stratagem was triumphant: but such was the *espiéglerie* of Miss Hogg, and such her unwillingness either that her own skill in disguises should go unnoticed, or that Salmon should, as they say, “get off altogether” from the punishment due to his infidelity to *her* in marrying without even so much as apprising her of his intention, that just as the parties had divided, and as the coaches were driving off in different directions, the young lady whipped off her green spectacles, and, popping her head out of the window, said, “Good day, Mrs. S. ! when you go to the play next, I hope you ’ll contrive to behave better.”

This was “letting slip the dogs of war” with a vengeance: these words opened worlds of deception and dissimulation to Mrs. Salmon’s wondering mind. She now saw that she had been duped and deceived intentionally, and her

husband was in the plot ; all his protestations that what had been done, was done for the best, that it would have been most shocking to have had anything like a quarrel in the coach, and so on, were wholly unavailing in the way of soothing her : she was implacable ; nor was Salmon himself less irate with the Thespian, who certainly had sacrificed to vanity and jealousy the peace and tranquillity of a couple which she at first had unintentionally disturbed.

What the ultimate results of this travelling masquerade were, the reader may yet live to hear.

CHAPTER V.

IN about ten days from the date of his purchase, and not before, Brag was informed by his captain, Bung, that "The Psyche" was "ready for sea;" the aforesaid Bung, being an exception to the general rule of nautical honesty and fair-dealing, having successfully persuaded Jack into the absolute necessity of stocking and victualling her, as if she were going to make a fresh voyage to the Pole, in order to discover that there is nothing to find out.

It was curious enough to see the boaster caught in his own snare: his last step had compelled him really to do all, or most of the things about which he had, through the previous years of his life, only talked; there was really the yacht,—the captain and crew were really there,—really there was his own man,

(butler and valet;) there were really all the essentials for luncheon, and its consequences; and there was Lady Lavinia doing the honours, and issuing her invitations to make up the party for the first cruise; those to whom she sent her missives being too glad to get afloat, even with her ladyship.

Brag liked it very much; it seemed somehow that he was beginning to realize all his visions; but as there are drawbacks to all pleasures, so in *his* case there occurred one, which at first appeared insurmountable. Jack went on board about twelve o'clock. It was a fine fresh day, and everything looked propitious for a trip.

When he got on the deck of "The Psyche," the mainsail, which had been shaken out, began to flap and flutter, and Jack surveyed it with an awe not to be described: he looked ahead, and saw one or two yachts plunging head foremost into the rising billows, and then riding over their curling heads in a manner which filled him with the most terrible apprehensions.

"It blows uncommon hard, Bung," said Jack.

“Nice breeze as ever was, sir,” said the captain.

“Those vessels out there, are bobbing up and down a good deal ;—a’n’t they?” said Jack.

“Pitches a few sir,” said Bung. “When we gets further out, the swell will be longer. We may, perhaps, get a bit of a twister off Spithead, if it holds as it does now: but Psyche’s an uncommon dry boat.”

Into the fair-weather mind of Brag, the idea of her ever being wet, had never yet entered.

“Oh!” said Brag, “a dry boat, and no mistake.”

“Not a bit o’ one, sir,” said Bung. “She was a little crank last year: but I’ve got a ton or two more ballast just a-midships, which, as I calculate, makes her all right.”

“Umph!” said Brag, who kept his eyes fixed upon the boom, which gave evident signs of liveliness, as the wind took the sail.

“The ladies are coming aboard, sir,” said Hickman, Jack’s new servant,—“quite a treasure,” who had lived with Captain Chipstead as long as that gallant officer could contrive to

keep him, and who was, therefore, a perfect master of his art in his present capacity.

“Are they?” said Jack. “What a lot!”

Accordingly, the boat containing these fair creatures, pulled alongside; and Jack, standing at the gangway, handed on to the deck of his yacht, Lady Lavinia Newbiggen, Miss Hastings, Lady and Miss Wattle, Captain Hazleby, —a sort of lover of the latter,—Miss Lumsden, intimate associate of Miss Hastings, and Dr. Munx, Lady Olivia’s physician in ordinary; not one of which amiable and respectable individuals, with the exception of Lady Lavinia and her niece, were in any very particular degree known to Jack, and not one of them caring whether he were hanged or not, the next day, *their* object being, to carry on their respective flirtations, enjoy the cruise, and satisfy the appetite it most probably would create, by the demolition of his luncheon.

Selwyn was too good a dramatist not to have conceived a sort of under plot, in which he was himself to perform the principal part. Scarcely had the first detachment of *Houris* set their

feet on board, before Selwyn and his friend Mr. Buckthorne, whom he brought with him, in order to make his own appearance nothing particular, were at the side.

“ Oh, Mr. Selwyn,” said Lady Lavinia, “ I didn’t know we were to have the pleasure of your society.”

“ *I* asked *him* to come,” said Jack ; “ all right, and no mistake.”

The emphasis which Jack so studiously placed upon the monosyllable “ *him*,” tended in some degree to enlighten her ladyship as to his notions of the free-and-easy style in which she introduced her, by *him*, uninvited party ; however, there they were. Bung came up to Jack, and enquired if he expected any more company.

“ ’Pon my life ! I don’t know,” said Jack, for once quite out of his element :—“ does anybody know if anybody else is coming ?”

A dead silence succeeded to the question.

“ Shall we cast off from the buoy, sir ?” said Bung.

“ What boy ?” said Jack ; “ I don’t expect no boys.”

Whereupon his guests laughed a little.

“ I mean, sir,” said the captain, touching the rim of his hat, “ are you ready to start ?”

“ Oh ! yes,” said Brag, getting rather soured at finding that nobody paid the slightest attention to anything he said. “ I ’m ready ;—only mind the wind.”

“ Forward there,” cried Bung, — and no sooner were the words out of his mouth than Hickman jumped up the companion and cried, “ Bung, Bung !—hold hard :—the ice and the pines isn’t come aboard ; nor not one of the perigoos (as he pronounced it.) I say, make the signal 1906 for the ices ; 2014 for the pines — numeral four, and blue-pierced white, at the gaff, with a gun, for the perigoos : — I can’t sail without the perigoos.”

“ Oh ! no,” said Jack, not knowing what on earth or water it meant — “ we can’t go without the perrigoose, for fear of accidents ; I won’t go out to sea without the perrigoose.”

“ What ’s the use,” said Bung to Hickman, “ o’ you talking to me of making signals ? — it’s as much as my life’s worth. Mr. Brag

isn't a member of the squadron : how can I use them 'ere signals ? If I did, the yachtmen, as sure as we stand here, would load them 'ere carronades which poke their noses out of the iron railings in front of the '*Clubbus*,' and blow us to *hattoms*."

" Don't do that, captain," said Jack ; " anything reasonable I don't mind. If the perri-goose is absolutely necessary, have it aboard ; but no tricking — no affront to the squadron — no : all straight up, right down, and no mistake."

" Why, sir," said Hickman in a whisper to Jack, " there's more come aboard than you told me of ; and if you haven't something more in the way of provisions, they'll be all out of sorts."

" Out of sorts !" said Jack — " not if they are like me the other day when I came over here : they'll be a deuced sight more out of sorts the more they eat — eh ? — right down, straight up, and *no* mistake."

" Why, sir," said Hickman in the same subdued tone, " I have been at this work with the

captain now three or four years — that is, you know, sir, as long as he could stand it, — and I know the whole — what I call the whole scale and bearing of this sort of thing. They all hate the sea as much as I, and, begging your pardon, *you* do ; but it's a something to do : and then the young gentlemen, and the young ladies, like it ; and the old ones like it—but they like the consolations below, sir, — the luncheon — all that, rely upon it. You'll forgive me, sir ; if you want the thing to go off well, you'll make Bung hoist 1906 — 2014, and hoist blue-peter at the gaff, with a gun."

" Hoist Peter where ?" said Jack.

" At the gaff, sir," said Hickman, " where we generally run up the ensign."

Jack's small mind was now so entirely overloaded with ices, pines, and perrigoose, (unknown to him by that name,) that he saw in his servant's proposition about the signal, nothing but an option between hanging an ensign in the army, or Blue Peter, whom he had established in his mind as being one of his crew, so nicknamed by his shipmates.

It is notorious that servants *will* have their way, and Psyche was not suffered to get way upon her, until, in defiance of signal-making, Mr. Hickman had sent ashore for his ices, his pines, and his perigeux pies, which duly arrived in half an hour, much to the surprise of Jack, who did not know a French *paté* by that name. Hickman enjoyed exceedingly the innocence of his master ; and having been, as Jack would have said, “ put up ” to the necessity of having an increase of provisions by the strangers,—who had a much greater influence over Hickman than Jack himself had, from having been friends of Captain Chipstead—he resolved upon having a strong reinforcement of *comestibles, coute qui coute*.

At last, everything being ready, Bung gave the word to cast off—“ Haul taut the sheet ; ” and away ran “ The Psyche ” out of the harbour like an arrow from a bow.

“ To the Nab ? sir,” said Bung to Brag.

“ Oh ! in course,—Oh, yes, go to the Nab,” said Jack.

She rounded out beautifully. The ladies

were in ecstasies ; nothing could be more charming. Clear of the harbour, she began to feel the breeze.

“ You ’ll take the helm, sir, won’t you ?” said Bung to Brag.

“ No,” said Jack, “ no — nothing, thank you, before luncheon.”

“ Stand by there.” “ Aye, aye, sir” — “ About she goes !” Flap — slap went the mainsail : shiver — shake — round went the boom : off went Jack’s hat — he hadn’t yet hoisted a cap : splash came a sea — whisked over her bows : the ladies laughed. Bung cried — “ Steady now : — there, there — that ’ll do. Belay there, Jim. On with that hatch. Clear away there. Mind your eye, Jack.”

And then Psyche began to pitch and knock up the spray, much to the surprise of her sporting owner, who was however speedily released from the embarrassment of being unhatted by the provident Hickman, who brought him up a cap, such as he ought to have worn at starting.

“ Delightful breeze !” said Mr. Buckthorne

to Jack, who was holding on, like grim Death, by the companion, looking in the face as white as a sheet.

“ Very nice indeed,” said Jack.

Dash came another bright silvery spray over her bows, which flew on high, and sparkled in the sun like a dancing rainbow.

“ Oh, my !” said Jack, “ that ’s uncommon severe, eh ! — and no mistake.”

“ Lord love you, sir !” said Bung, “ she ’s like a duck in the water. Here ’s a stiff-’un coming ; see how she ’ll rise to that.”

And, sure enough, a great white horse came foaming and splashing along, and over it she went ! Glorious confirmation of her duck-like qualities.

“ By Job !” said Jack, holding on, “ we are well out of that.”

“ Bung,” cried the doctor, “ here comes a twister.”

And before the words were out of his mouth, a good toppling wave struck her nearly a-midships — Bung giving the doctor, who had been

a constant companion of Chipstead in his voyages, one of those cunning looks which are perfectly understood amongst the initiated, as he gave Psyche a “yaw,” up into the wind, in order to make the beautiful pneumatic exhibition which followed, for the benefit of her new owner.

This, however, was more than Jack could stand, and after this shake he made a rapid disappearance. He descended to the cabin, not however half so much affected by the mere physical effects of the motion as by his moral apprehension that nothing short of a miracle could save them from perdition.

Upon the next tack they ran away beautifully — not to poor Brag’s eyes, who having thrown himself horizontally upon one of the well-stuffed sofas in his cabin, and having made himself rather better, thought that nothing ever could restore “Psyche” to the gentle upright position in which she rode so easily when he bought her : and what added to his misery was, hearing the mirthful conversation of his unknown guests, none of whom had

left the deck, or abandoned the delights of participating in the pleasures of the day.

Just as Jack was getting what he called a little easy and comfortable — barring his constant apprehensions of some dreadful calamity, — his ears were assailed by Lady Lavinia's voice, calling upon him loudly and repeatedly, to know when they were to have luncheon. He could not disobey the summons of the noble Orlebar with whom he sought an alliance, and he therefore roused himself. Hickman advised him to bathe his temples with cold water, and drink brandy ; both of which he did ; — a mode of taking brandy and water which a particular friend of his would have pronounced the very best mode of administering the beverage. However, Jack was completely beaten, and it was with the greatest difficulty Hickman could get him to sit right up, and no mistake ! while, by his command, he summoned the guests to their repast.

It is not an agreeable subject to dwell upon, but as the mishap affords a new illustration of Jack's absurdities — only imagine a man hav-

ing been dreadfully, and being still considerably, sick, oppressed and agitated by a certain quantum of alarm, and labouring moreover under the influence of an unsavoury smell of pitch, moreen-damask, savoury viands, and fresh paint, having to preside at a table which was dancing the hays, and help a squashy French pie, made by a Cowes confectioner. In addition to this, Jack had to behold the destruction of flocks of fowls, hams, tongues, and sundry more delicate things, by people whom he had never seen before, and who were, unluckily for him, what are called good sailors.

Things went on pretty well; Lady Lavinia encouraged him, — for she really liked him: pop went the champagne corks — (splash came a sea down the companion): — more fowls; more *moussu* — more seas: — and it was pleasant to observe how careful Captain Hazleby was of Miss Wattle, who could hardly keep her seat in her chair without his assistance. Selwyn too, who in the confusion of the moment had contrived to get near Miss Hast-

ings, was equally attentive to *her*; while Dr. Munx, a great favourite with Lady Lavinia, kept prescribing repeated draughts of Jack's champagne, which her ladyship kept swallowing, weeping a little as the day wore on, and saying to herself, audibly enough to be heard by Jack—"How my poor dear Henry would have liked such a day as this!"

The beauty of the day, however, began to fade away; the bright sky was overcast with clouds, and a meteorological contest took place between the wind and the rain. It became impossible for the ladies to return to the deck, and indispensably necessary to shut the cabin skylights. This was extremely agreeable to Jack, whose health, under existing circumstances, required the admission of a very considerable quantity of oxygen, and who, when the cucumber-frame was put over what he called the square hole in the floor, felt as one may suppose a sparrow feels, under the receiver of an air-pump during the process of exhaustion.

"The wind has all died away," said Mr.

Buckthorne, when he returned from the deck.

“ Here we are, off St. Helens, and, as Bung says, when we shall get away nobody can tell.”

“ But what are we to do ?” said Jack, to whom every novelty of circumstance presented some new peril.

“ Stay where we are, I presume,” said Dr. Munx.

This produced a laugh. Dr. Munx was pleased, and called for some more champagne.

Psyche began to roll a little, and her wet mainsail to flap heavily.

“ What the deuce is that noise ?” said Jack.

“ The mainsail flapping,” said Buckthorne.

“ Why do they let it flap ?” said Jack.

“ Because,” said the facetious Munx, “ they can’t help it.”

Another laugh.

“ Well then, I suppose it ’s all right,” said Jack, “ and no mistake : — but a’n’t we rolling about, a good deal ?”

“ That ’s because there ’s no wind ; the rain has beaten it dead hollow,” said Buckthorne.

This last reason killed the last of Jack’s

hopes. When he found his light and lively yacht spanking and splashing through the water—pitching into one wave and rising over the next—he felt himself dreadfully unwell. Hickman, his servant and counsellor, then observed that it *did* blow fresh, and that there *was* a good deal of sea on, upon which Jack took to praying that the wind would, what he called, “go down,” and make Psyche easier. His petition to Æolus, it seems, had been heard, and the breeze had subsided into a calm; and now, when the great object of all his wishes was actually obtained, Psyche was ten times more uneasy than she was before.

The state of affairs was very considerably changed by the change of weather: the ladies ceased smiling; Lady Lavinia felt drowsy; the men kept peeping and peering up the companion. The heavy tread of the crew upon the wet deck, and their muttered conversations, combined to excite the most melancholy feelings in Jack’s mind, whose amiable assurance was so greatly weakened by the state of his health, that he could not rally and stand up

against the off-hand replies and retorts, "not always courteous," of the doctor.

"Hickman," said Mr. Buckthorne to the servant, "have you got any cards on board?"

"I believe there are two or three packs, sir," replied Hickman.

Well, muttered Jack to himself, I think he might as well have asked *me* that question.

"We may have a little *Ecarté*," said Captain Hazleby.—(These words conjured up in Jack's mental eye the vision of Stiffkey and the I. O. U.)—"Lady Lavinia, what say you to a hand?"

"I don't think I can see the cards," said her ladyship, alluding to the darkness of the day.

I should wonder if you could, thought Jack, after drinking all that champagne.

"Oh! don't play cards," said Munx. "How long shall we be getting back?"

"Bung says," replied Buckthorne, "we shall never get back, if a breeze doesn't spring up. There's no chance of *that*, while the rain holds; and even if it *should* should come to

blow a little, the wind will be right in our teeth, so we shall have to beat up."

"Well but," said Jack, "can't we get out and go ashore, and walk home!"

This produced a general roar, which roused Lady Lavinia from her serene slumber; and for her ladyship's benefit the question was repeated by Dr. Munx in his happiest style.

"Oh," said her ladyship, "you are so droll! —this is the sort of thing he is continually saying.—It quite kills me."

"No," said Buckthorne — "as matters look now, the chances are we shall sleep on board: at all events we sha'n't get back till ten or eleven."

"That's a bore," said Hazleby. "I'm engaged to a most agreeable dinner at seven."

"And we," said Miss Wattle, "are going to Lady Thunderum's ball."

"Oh! so am I," said Buckthorne, "and all of us, I conclude; but we can't command the elements."

"Have you nothing new to give us, Mr. Selwyn, in the literary way?" asked Miss

Lumsden, who knew she could not better please her friend Fanny than by bringing her lover forward.

“ Oh ! do — do — pray, do ! Read us something, Mr. Selwyn, or recite,” said Munx ; “ anything by way of amusement.”

“ I have got my last poem in my pocket, by mere chance,” said Selwyn. “ I have often promised Lady Lavinia to read it ; this, I think, would be a good opportunity.”

“ Oh, dear !” said Munx.

“ What say you, Lady Lavinia ?” said Lady Wattle,—“ They say you are sovereign here.”

“ Our great captain’s captain,” said Munx.

“ Why,” exclaimed Jack, “ that’s out of Othello.”

“ In it, if you please,” said Munx.

The very recollection of Othello, coupled with the dread that Dr. Munx might have last seen it at Lewes, threw poor Jack into a fresh confusion.

“ Oh ! yes,” said Lady Lavinia, “ as Mr. Selwyn is here, he may as well make himself agreeable, if he can.”

“Aunt!” said Fanny, in a soft but reproachful tone.

“I shall be too happy,” said Selwyn, producing from his pocket the manuscript, which, having had some experience of the uncertainty of yacht voyages, he had brought with him, in the hopes of obtaining an opinion of such acknowledged judges of literary merit as Lady Lavinia and Dr. Munx.

Selwyn accordingly moved himself out of the corner in which he had been sitting, and poking across the cabin at an angle of forty-five degrees, caught hold of a dancing chair, and placing it at the bottom of the table, seated himself, and began his last pet favourite work.

“Lady Lavinia,” said Dr. Munx, “I do *not* think you are well. Sudden changes come over your countenance—affected by the motion; clouds swimming before your eyes—giddiness in your head?”

“Exactly so,” said her ladyship.

“I must take you under my care, Lady Lavinia,” said the doctor. “Put you through a

three years' course of my infinitesimal medicines, which will enable me to form a just estimate of your ladyship's constitution."

"Isn't that rather a long time to wait?" said Hazleby.

"No," said Munx, "the new school have determined to do nothing in a hurry. The human frame and constitution are much too delicate to be handled so roughly as the present race of physicians handle them. In fact, we have discovered that all medicines are injurious that are visibly effective, and that unless administered after the new fashion, they eventually increase the complaints for which they are given; hence we argue (and our success has been established), that it is better to do nothing than do mischief."

"There I quite agree with the doctor," said Lady Wattle.

"When I say, nothing," said Munx, "I speak, of course, comparatively. Our system, in fact, is composed of a combination of what, to the vulgar, appear most ridiculous contradictions: for instance, a great deal of poison

kills a man,—*ergo*, a little poison will do him good ; — therefore we take care to give him sufficient poison to produce a disorder which we know we can cure, in order to prevent his having some other disorder which we equally well know we cannot.”

“ Yes but, Doctor,” said Hazleby, “ the delicacy of your proceedings in the poison line is very striking. My sister-in-law called in one of your school, unknown to the family physician, and after pecking at the pin’s-head pills of the new school for a month she got ashamed of her duplicity, told Doctor Fang the whole history of her defection, and quackery, and showed him a box containing materials for working out the new and infallible system which were to last her for a twelvemonth, expressing to him at the same time the mingled dread and veneration with which the magical remedies inspired her. Fang smiled, and taking the box, emptied its contents into his hand, and swallowed the whole of them at one gulp before the face of his recreant patient, to her infinite horror and astonishment.”

“That is more than anything you could possibly have said, confirmatory of the safety of our principles,” said Munx. “Our success I tell you does not depend upon the application of a remedy homœopathically, so much as upon the minuteness of the dose; the effects of which are the greater as it approaches the finite bounds of dilution.”

“I perceive,” said Buckthorne, “that the Poor-law Commissioners have regulated their proceedings upon precisely the same system. According to their *dictum*,—‘The less a man eats and drinks the fatter and stronger he gets. Minute medicaments, in the shape of half-ounces of Dutch cheese and half-pints of water, ‘approaching, as near as possible, the finite bounds of dilution,’ are most judiciously substituted for the vulgar beef and beer which the Allopathic asses of other days administered to the old and weak and infirm, in the hope of nourishing age, and strengthening infirmity.”

“Quite right, quite right,” exclaimed the

Doctor. "The Allopathic system exactly defined.—The gross masses of beef, the lengthened potations of beer, exactly correspond with the powerful remedies hitherto prescribed, which, we have now so satisfactorily ascertained, produce of themselves, symptoms which did not characterize the original malady."

"I agree with you there," said Buckthorne. "The original symptoms were hunger and thirst, the beef and beer overcame those, and replaced them by very different ones."

"The whole thing resolves itself into this one principle," said Munx,— "minuteness of application."

"Why," said Hazleby, "your practice reminds me of the Duke of Buckingham—reading "power" for "love." *You* say,—

Your power is great because it is so small,
to which I add, like his Grace,—

Then were it greatest were it none at all!"

"What," said Lady Lavinia, "do you call a minute application?"

“Why,” said Munx, “it is difficult to explain to your ladyship. The only admissible vehicles for homœopathic medicine are amadine, the saccharine basis of milk, and alcohol reduced to a certain specific gravity at 60° of Fahrenheit.”

“What a lovely name for a medicine,” said Lady Wattle. Amadine!—I think if I had a daughter born now, I would christen her Amadine.”

“Why,” said Munx, “that—I—the word is a good word,—it is classical and euphonious, but the material,—the English,—the vulgar name of the article it designates,—is starch.”

Here a laugh, at the expense of her ladyship, gave poor Fanny hopes that the subject would drop, and that Selwyn, who had been now for some time seated, book in hand, ready to begin his poem, would have an opportunity of delighting their ears with his mellifluous voice.

“Starch, sugar of milk, and spirits of wine, and water,” said Munx, “are the vehicles.

The medicines must be made in a laboratory sheltered from the sun's rays, yet so ventilated as not to be liable to the odious odours which so dangerously distinguish the atmosphere of an apothecary's shop: the scales to weigh them must be so sensitively delicate, as to turn with the hundredth part of a grain, and the largest vessel in the laboratory need only be a minim measure graduated to a hundred drops."

"You should send to Lilliput, Doctor, to get practitioners," said Hazleby. "I wish Swift were alive, to give us a history of your proceedings."

"The race is not always to the Swift," said Munx, facetiously. "Our principle is admirable: we administer nothing but dried vegetables, or imperceptible minerals. Only look at our tinctures; when it comes to that, we get our extracts, mix them with spirits of wine, and stop them up in little bottles. What do we do with those tinctures—make them by taking out of our little bottles little bits of our invaluable mass—half the size of

a poppy seed—add alcohol in the proportion of twenty minims to one grain of the mash ; let it stand in a warm room, let the pellucid liquor drop out of it,—keep it. That's the secret for tinctures.”

“ Ah !” said Jack, who thought it was absolutely necessary in his own yacht to say something, “ that's it,—eh ? straight up, right down, and no mistake.”

“ Then for regulating their modifications,” said Munx : “ eleven grains of sugar of milk, diligently triturated for an hour with one of the medicament, whatever it is, added again, to eleven grains of sugar of milk, and triturated for another hour, produces another degree of attenuation ; while one hundred drops of gin and water—we call it alcohol—Hodges, Booth, or spirits of wine, as circumstances require, mingled with a grain of the medicament ;—ninety-nine minims to one of the combination—expands the quality of the medicament another degree, and so on for every subsequent dilution. The degrees of expansion and attenuation are

regularly adapted to the disease and constitution of the patient."

"Well," said Buckthorne, "it is something to know that you pretend to pay so much attention to circumstances as that."

"The table of expansions is a very curious and scientific paper," said Munx. "The degrees run thus,—the highest point to which the calculation is carried being one grain.

1. First <i>deg. of expansion</i>	A hundredth part.
2. Second . . .	Ten-thousandth.
I. Third . . .	A millionth.
II. Sixth . . .	Billionth.
III. Ninth . . .	Trillionth.
IV. Twelfth . . .	Quadrillionth.
V. Fifteenth . . .	Quintillionth.
VI. Eighteenth . . .	Sextillionth.
VII. Twenty-first . . .	Septillionth.
VIII. Twenty-fourth . . .	Octillionth.
IX. Twenty-seventh . . .	Nonillionth.
X. Thirtieth . . .	Decillionth.

And then for the intervening expansions we stick certain dots and scribbles on the little

bottles, which are perfectly intelligible to the initiated."

"I declare, Lady Lavinia," said Lady Wattle, "I never heard anything so satisfactory in my life: one grain of predicament, no bigger than a poppy-seed, to be expanded to a decillionth. What elasticity it must give to the system."

"Elasticity!" said Munx; "the sensations produced by an adherence to the system are indescribable; and then the convenience,—a whole dose, if liquid, is absorbed by five grains of sugar of milk, and if in powder, may be converted into an ample draught by a single dew-drop."

"Bravo! Doctor," said Hazleby: "a noble remedy. But now in a case of a violent accession of inflammatory symptoms, eh? what would you do *then*? use your infinitesimals,—eh? You might as well play a boy's squirt into a burning powder-mill."

"Oh," said Munx, "I do not admit the possibility of anything of the sort you imagine, while the patient is under the regimen of the Homœopathic school."

“Regimen,” said Lady Lavinia. “What ! must not we eat or drink during the time we are swallowing the pins’ heads and poppy seeds ?”

“You may eat everything,” said Munx, “everything,—fish, flesh, and fowl, (except ducks, geese, pork, veal, and shell-fish,) eggs, weak black-tea, and cocoa, are good. Milk you may have, and fruits boiled that are not acid. Drink toast-and-water, barley-water, weak brandy-and-water—one eighth brandy ; no wine, certainly no spices, no green-tea, no coffee, no salads, no malt-liquor, and, above all, no parsley, no onions, and no raw fruit of any kind ;—duck, is death ; pork—poison ; and parsley, perdition. One decillionth of a parsley leaf settles you ; in fact, parsley, pork, and perfumes, are destructive.”

Jack, who, having seen Munx eat most ravenously of veal pie, ham, and salad, watched him swallow glass after glass of his champagne, and beheld him munching pineapples as if they were turnips, could stand this absurdity no longer,—“Well, Doctor,” said he,

“how do you find this mode of training and feeding suit your own book?”

“Oh,” said Munx, “it perfectly coincides with the doctrines I have advocated in my book which I have published on the subject.”

“Not a bit of *that*,” said Jack: “I won’t have *that* at no price. I mean, how does it agree with you yourself?”

“Oh!” said Munx, “I — I don’t attend to the rules myself: I have no constitutional disposition to any particular disease. I—that is—I——”

“I think,” said Jack, “pine-apples is raw fruit; and the pie, which you have eat half of, is veal; the ham shews plenty of bone, the salad-bowl, which was before you, is empty; and, as far as the champagne goes ——”

“By the way,” said Munx, who was the most impudent of all pretenders—Jack himself not excepted, “I hope it isn’t all gone.”

“Hickman,” said Buckthorne, “have you got any more champagne in ice?”

“Aye, aye, sir,” said Hickman, to the utter dismay and confusion of Jack, who found him-

self in almost as helpless a position in his own boat as a constitutional king with a cabinet full of overbearing ministers.

“Depend upon it,” said Munx, “my dear Lady Lavinia, if you pursue a regular course of these medicines for eight or ten years, you will imperceptibly find your life extended. I merely state that abstinence”—(“Mind, Hickman, don’t pour the champagne over”)—“and that future generations will bless the discoverers of so magnificent an accession to the world of science in its most important department.”

A pause ensued. Fanny, the timid — yet, when love-prompted, the bold advocate of wit and genius, again said — “Aunt, Mr. Selwyn is ready to begin his poem which you asked him to read to us.”

“By the way, Lady Lavinia,” said Hazleby, — “I beg your pardon, one moment, Mr. Selwyn;—will you tell me what is the beginning of that beautiful little song of Lady Fanny’s which she sang us last week—something about ‘Fly, dearest Mary’—eh?”

“I remember,” said Lady Lavinia; “it was

very pretty. I don't recollect the words, or the music. Sing it to us, Hazleby—do!”

“ I can-*not* sing,” said Hazleby. “ I wonder if Chipstead's guitar is on board. Hickman !”

“ Aye, aye, sir.”

“ Is there a guitar on board ?”

“ No, sir.”

“ Mind, when we come again, to remind your master to have a guitar,” said Hazleby : “ one can't do without a guitar. We must have a guitar. Miss Wattle sings to the guitar, and so do I. Don't you recollect that charming little air that you gave us the last time we sailed together ? It was moonlight—all calm : and so bright.”

“ You never sing when you are asked,” said Lady Wattle.

“ Upon my word, I would now,” said Hazleby, “ but somehow I wetted my feet getting on shore last night, and have got a dreadful cold.”

“ Well then,” said Fanny, “ perhaps Mr. Selwyn will begin to read ?”

“ I shall be too glad,” said Selwyn, drawing his chair a little closer to the table.

“ I don’t mind, however,” said Hazleby, “ for once. Upon my word,— if I break down, don’t abuse me. I think I could manage to croak out a little thing which has just been published. I beg a thousand pardons, Selwyn ! —I will not detain you five minutes. Hem, hem !”

“ That ’s just the way,” said Fanny in a whisper to Miss Lumsden. “ It is all jealousy of poor Mr. Selwyn : Captain Hazleby wouldn’t sing under an hour’s pressing at any other time.”

“ Never mind, dear,” said Miss Lumsden.

“ Now then,” said Jack, — “ go along, if it kills you.”

The look Hazleby gave Jack, if he could have perfectly seen, or entirely comprehended it, would unquestionably have extinguished him.

“ Well,” said Hazleby, “ *commençons donc.*”

The Colonel has married Miss Fanny,
And quitted the turf and high play :
They’re gone down to live with his granny
In a sober and rational way.

Folks in town were all perfectly scared
When they heard of this excellent plan,
For nobody there was prepared
To think him a sensible man.

For Fanny two years he'd been sighing,
And Fanny continued stone-cold,
Till he made her believe he was dying ;
And Fan thought herself growing old.
So, one very fine night, at a *fête*,
When the moon shone as bright as it can,
She found herself left *tête-à-tête*
With this elegant sensible man.

There are minutes which lovers can borrow
From Time, ev'ry one worth an age ;
Equivalents each to the sorrow
They sweetly combine to assuage.
'Twas so on this heart-stirring eve ;
He explained ev'ry hope, wish, and plan :
She sighed, and began to believe
The Colonel a sensible man.

He talk'd about roses and bowers,
Till he dimm'd her bright eye with a tear ;
For though " Love cannot live upon flowers,"
Miss Fan. had four thousand a-year.
'Twas useless, she felt, to deny ;
So she used her bouquet for a fan ;
And averting her head, with a sigh,
Gave her heart to the sensible man.

“Bravo ! bravo !” echoed through the cabin ; and everybody was, or seemed to be, delighted except Fanny, who kept her eyes fixed upon Selwyn with an anxiety too characteristic of the interest she took in his proceedings.

“Capital !” said Buckthorne. “Whose words are they ?”

“I can guess,” said Lady Wattle.

“I can-*not*,” said Lady Lavinia.

“Tell us !” said Buckthorne.

“Do !” said Jack, who only said so, because he *would* say something.

“They are *so* pointed,” said Lady Wattle.

“And *so* personal,” said Munx, “there’s no mistaking the allusion. Name, name !”

“No,” said Hazleby, “I really cannot ; I am pledged.”

“Never mind pledges,” said Munx ; “tell us !”

“Do !” “do !” “do !” “do !” said all the party, excepting Fanny and Selwyn, whose thoughts were turned on very different things at the moment.

“Well,” said Hazleby,—“I suppose we are safe.”

“ I hope so,” said Jack.

“ All tiled,” said Hazleby—“ only don’t betray me ; because I hate breaking a confidence in these matters, let the person be whom he may.”

“ Not a syllable,” said one : — “ Close as wax,” said another : — “ Silent as the grave,” said a third.

“ Well then,” said Hazleby,—“ only I must whisper, because I should not like it to be known beyond our little party ; — they are by ——”

“ Yourself !” said Buckthorne.

“ No,” said Hazleby, “ they are *not* ; but under seal, recollect—they are written by my man Dickinson, who, although *I* say it, who should not, is, perhaps, in French blacking and fashionable song writing, superior to any man of his *metier* I ever met with. He makes a mint of money by his muse ; and I am too happy to encourage him in his poetical pursuits : but this is of course, as I have before said, all *entre nous*.”

This announcement was received with infi-

nite delight by the company, excepting again poor Fanny, who fancied that what Captain Hazleby said was not true, and that the words were his own; the history of his literary valet having been invented extempore, for the purpose of wounding Selwyn's feelings, and casting a reflection upon mercenary poets, as severe as those of Lord Byron, and quite as certain of being followed up by his taking whatever he could get for his own compositions. Fanny was probably right, and Hazleby had made the important sacrifice of his vanity for the gratification of his ill-nature.

"How kind you are," said Lady Wattle, "to sing to us."

"Very kind, indeed," said Dr. Munx: "it was because nobody asked him; if we had pressed him, he wouldn't have opened his mouth."

"His minim-box you mean, Doctor," said Buckthorne, "in the eighth degree of expansion."

"Well, Mr. Selwyn," said Fanny, "will you begin? Maria and I are anxiously waiting."

"I am ready," said Selwyn.

“One moment, Selwyn,” said Buckthorne. “Hickman, you must have some cards on board? look in that locker,—by the door. I know there were some.”

“What are you going to do with cards, now, Mr. Buckthorne?” said Fanny.

“Why, Miss Hastings,” said Buckthorne, “Hazleby and I can go on quietly with our game while Selwyn reads.”

“I should like to join you,” said Lady Lavinia; or, at all events, I’ll bet, and advise.”

“My dear aunt!” said Fanny.

“It is getting rather dark,” said Selwyn, whose patience was rapidly evaporating. “Are there any candles to be had?”

“Candles, Hickman!” cried Hazleby.

“None on board, sir,” said Hickman.

“My dear Brag,” said the Captain to Jack, “where are your candles? — never forget candles! — why we shall be in the dark for four hours before we get ashore. Bung,” continued the vivacious cavalier, “where are we? Does it rain much?”

“Mizzling, sir,” said Bung. “We are

abreast of Stokes Bay, and as near as may be mid-channel. I think we shall have a spirt of wind presently."

"Now, Mr. Selwyn!" said Miss Lumsden.

"My dear Miss Lumsden," said Buckthorne, "do wait till Hickman finds the cards."

"It is getting dark," said Fanny.

"Oh," said Buckthorne, "there must be a light somewhere. Why we shall be like so many children playing blind-man's buff."

"What a charming little party, Lady Wattle, you gave us Tuesday," said Lady Lavinia, "those dear mazurkas. Mr. Brag, I tell you what—you must give us a ball."

"I have no house," said Jack.

"Lady Wattle will lend you hers," said Lady Lavinia, "and I'll invite the people."

"And I will manage the supper for you," said Hazleby.

"You are very kind; but——"

"But nothing," said Lady Lavinia. "You acknowledge me your sovereign,—I must be obeyed."

"Can't find any cards, sir, anywhere," said Hickman.

“Deuced provoking,” said Buckthorne. “It can’t be helped.”

“But now, Mr. Selwyn,” again said Fanny.

Selwyn opened his manuscript, and having hemmed thrice to beget attention, began—

“The silver moon on——”

“I beg pardon,” said Buckthorne; “but I think the breeze seems to be springing up. I’ll just step on deck. I’m getting fidgetty about dinner.” Selwyn made way for him, and up the ladder he skipped.

Selwyn recommenced—

“The silver moon on——”

“One moment, my dear fellow,” said Hazleby, “before you begin. I’ll just step up, too: we can hear you extremely well on deck: but it is getting infernally close; that was always the worst of this yacht,—a kind of fusty smell.”

“Well,” said Lady Lavinia, “I really *do* think it is very oppressive. Fanny dear, does it rain? I think I should like a little air myself.”

“I thought you wished to hear Mr. Selwyn read his poem?” said Fanny.

“ So I did,” said her ladyship ; “ but it was not so hot then.”

“ Can’t you tell us a funny story, Mr. Selwyn ?” said Munx.

“ Ah, do !” said Lady Wattle. “ I don’t mean one of your own, because you don’t write funny things ; but one——”

“ I know no stories,” said Selwyn. “ I—if you wish me to read——”

“ Oh, go on,” said Miss Lumsden ; “ they will be glad enough to listen when once you begin.”

“ Well,” said Selwyn, “ as *you* please.

“ The silver moon on——”

“ I say, by Jove !” cried Buckthorne, putting his head down the companion, “ there ’s a ship on fire in Portsmouth harbour !”

“ A fire !” cried one : “ A ship !” cried another : “ A ship on fire !” cried a third. “ I hope it ’s a long way off,” cried Jack. “ Oh ! how dreadful !” said Lady Lavinia. “ Splendid sight !” said Lady Wattle. And away they all scrambled up to see this magnificent spectacle, sweeping everything before them, nearly up-

setting the unhappy author in the rush, and leaving the cabin tenanted only by him and Fanny.

“I am quite ashamed of my aunt,” said Fanny, “and disgusted with the rest of the party: their conduct towards you is inexcusable.”

“Never mind,” said Selwyn; “if I have *your* pity, I am satisfied.”

“My aunt very much mistakes my character,” said Fanny, “if she imagines that, by endeavouring to lower you in your own estimation, she can lower you in mine; such a course is foolish in the extreme,—an insult to the object of our esteem only increases our interest in him.”

“I am repaid for all that has passed,” said Selwyn. “*I am* esteemed?” He took Fanny’s hand, — pressed it, — it was not withdrawn. “Loved?” whispered he. A gentle pressure of his hand by Fanny, was the practical answer to this deciding question. It *was* given, and she sank back on her seat, and burst into tears.

“Very fine!” said one of the party on deck; “—strong flame,—burns fiercer!”

"Where's Fanny?" exclaimed Lady Lavinia.

"She is below," said Selwyn, standing on the deck, close to her ladyship, a position to which he had attained by a sudden spring up the companion, having been "signalled" by a wave of Fanny's hand to leave her on the instant, lest the fire-worshippers might return and find them *tête-à-tête*; a discovery most unquestionably the prelude of a scene, the points of which would have received a wonderful accession of force from the appearance of Fanny in tears.

The party remained on deck, watching the "splendid spectacle," which, instead of a ship on fire, proved eventually to be nothing but the flame from a brick-kiln near Alverstoke, until it began again to rain: they then hurried down again, and huddled themselves up in corners,—the darkness nearly complete, the wags worn out, and Jack himself fast asleep. Two only of the party were happy, and they only happy, because they were together.

Several attempts at renewing a conversation

were made, and failed. Buckthorne's watch was a repeater, and the principal recreation during the voyage, was making it strike half-hours, and quarters, three-quarters, and whole hours, which it periodically continued to do until three-quarters past ten; at which period a slight increase of bustle "'pon deck" gave indication of an approach to Cowes; and just as the church clock was striking eleven, the anchor was let go, and "The Psyche" brought up; the Yacht Club-house distant three-quarters of a mile, which, considering the wind was blowing fresh from the southward, was all that could be done for her.

"Well, here we are," said Buckthorne, "at last."

"Where?" said Jack.

"At Cowes," replied Buckthorne.

"Why, it is miles off," said Jack, looking at the lights of the town.

"No," said Buckthorne; "a mile, perhaps."

"And how are we to get there?" said Jack.

"In the boat," was the answer.

"Bung," said Hazleby, "it rains deuced

hard still. Hadn't you better make the night signal for umbrellas?"

"Can't, sir," said Bung, and he whispered something to Hazleby.

"Oh, ah!" said Hazleby; "I forgot *that*."

"No, I wish I did," said Jack, who had overheard the captain's subdued observation that "Mr. Brag did not belong to the Club."

In the midst of this discussion, it was found that the boat could only take the party at two trips. It was pitch-dark, a good deal of sea on, and the rain beating right out of the harbour into the faces of the pleasure-hunters on their return from the chase. Then came the squabbling as to who should go first:—the ladies, of course,—then two gentlemen were to be selected; and while the decision was under debate, Hazleby and Buckthorne summarily decided the question by stepping into the boat and shoving off; and it is difficult to say which heart was the more agitated, that of Selwyn or Jack Brag, as they stood watching the boat, till it became a black speck upon the dark blue waves with which it seemed to

struggle for existence. Selwyn almost wept to think that all he loved in the world was exposed to the discomfort and inconvenience of such a night, without his being with her to share her ills; and Jack trembled to think, that in another half-hour or so he should himself be doomed to a similar expedition.

His turn came. In about an hour the boat returned; and although Jack had made sundry suggestions about staying on board till the morning, and talked somewhat largely of cold and rain, he was utterly defeated by the care and civility of Lady Lavinia, who sent back by the boat, boat-cloaks and umbrellas in plenty,—the latter being, however, rendered entirely useless by the force of the wind.

Away they went, much after the fashion of their predecessors, save that it blew harder and the sea was rougher,—a combination of circumstances which produced upon Jack a sensation to which he had hitherto been a stranger:—it was not sickness—it was not fear,—but it was a happy mixture of both, by which he was attacked. Every pitch brought, as the old

women say, his heart into his mouth ; and as the boat's bow dipped into the trough of the sea, he grasped the gunwale at his side, as tightly as possible, hoping to produce some beneficial effect, without any clearly-defined notion as to what it might be.

In getting out, Jack "missed his tip" in a jump, and first took to earth in three feet water ; and was eventually lugged out and carried on shore on the back of one of his crew, —Munx observing that, although he had proclaimed himself to be remarkably hungry during their passage from "Psyche," he was not exceedingly *dry*!—a joke of Jack's own, for the commission of which by the Doctor, he would have been gratified to see him gibbeted. The *friends*, however, parted, each talking of the delightful day they had spent, and all separately voting the whole affair the most unequalled and unqualified bore.

Delightful or dreadful as it might have been to some, or all of the party, Brag himself was made perfectly miserable. His detestation of the sea he had overcome in order to do the

thing properly ; all his prudential precautions as to finance had been broken through, in order to carry the great point of putting himself practically on a footing with those with whom he wished to associate, — and, above all, to secure the prize to which he had all through life looked so anxiously, “ a titled wife.”

What is the result ? He gets his yacht—*she* makes his party ; his man, transferred from a ruined spendthrift, prepares the banquet ; his unknown guests feast at his charge,— talk of things he does not comprehend, — of people he never saw, — until, seeing him completely overpowered by their *nonchalance*, they dispense with even the common courtesy of consulting *him*, or asking him for anything they may happen to want, referring wholly to the servant whom he had hired, as if he had been so hired for their sole use and accommodation.

During the whole day Jack had never rallied : pale and sad, the pert prig of other times remained both sick in body and mind, full of wrath which he dared not express, and of repentance which he was ashamed to admit ; and

when he got himself dried, rubbed, and put to bed, he began to think that a theoretical pretender was at all events a cheaper and better thing than a practical one.

CHAPTER VI.

OBNOXIOUS as Brag's first voyage had been to the numerous negative evils which ordinarily attend such enterprises, it certainly differed very considerably in one respect ; it had, by the circumstances which it had involved, brought to a crisis the affair between Selwyn and Fanny Hastings.

In looking at society, it is more curious than agreeable to see how very much of selfishness pervades everything connected with its affairs. I have elsewhere recorded the opinion of my poor friend Moss, who said that six-and-eightpence was at the bottom of everything in this world, — an opinion of the correctness of which every day's fresh experience the more fully satisfies me. Lady Lavinia's six-and-eightpenny feeling was evinced—it must be owned pruden-

tially, in her resolution not to sanction a marriage between her niece and the young author; but her selfishness was still more strongly exhibited in pressing him into a constant association with her, because *she* herself enjoyed his society, and was pleased with the *éclat* of having even so tame a lion in her menagerie. There he was, and there he continued to be, and there he would have continued to be for the next year or two, living in a state of constant fever of dread and anxiety, hope and fear, had not her ladyship's ill-breeding, coupled, to be sure, with Captain Hazleby's coarseness, brought the affair to what some might consider a premature conclusion.

Whatever might have been the night-thoughts of the beaten, mortified, and mystified Jack, after he retired to roost, and not to rest, those of Selwyn at his inn, and Fanny Hastings at her aunt's, were of a nature not much better calculated to promote slumber. She had confessed—committed herself; he was pledged to *her*.

It is wonderful to think what a very little time it takes to do very great things;—a match

to a mine ; a finger on a trigger ; a knife to the rope which holds the balloon to earth ; the last blow of the mallet against the last dog-shore of a ship on the slip.—Here, the one—one squeeze of a hand in an obscure corner of a tallow-chandler's yacht had decided the fate of two people,—changed the whole character of their relative positions, and opened to their views and imaginations prospects of their future existence, of which the night before they would scarcely have dreamed.

No few hours are fuller of interest, of every varied nature and character, than those which follow an offer and acceptance. The hour after a rejection is one, perhaps, of triumph to the “scornful lady,” and perhaps, she revels in it ; but when the “aye” is once pronounced, see what a train of thoughts occupy her mind :—the doubts—the fears which agitate her, lest she has rashly yielded her heart, confided herself and her destiny to the care of her lover, and bound herself to share his fortunes, bear with his temper, bend to his will, and submit herself to his dictation, however gently asserted or

mildly urged ; to live with him perhaps through a long life, and have no confidence but in him. All these things were floating in Fanny's mind, mingled, it is true, with bright hopes and cheerful anticipations. Selwyn's genius and accomplishments were all to her ; the one would secure him competence, — the other soothe and charm them in his leisure hours : — and they could and would be so happy in their cottage ?

Selwyn felt equally sanguine and enthusiastic as to the ulterior results, but with a manly mind, so different from the devotedness of woman, his ardour was damped and his rapture checked by the doubts which occupied him, whether he should be able, in his present circumstances, to offer his beloved such a home as she could, without submitting to the most serious inconvenience, accept. These calculations and speculations, which engrossed the whole night, were concluded by a resolution the next day to try fair means at all events, before he resorted to foul ; and afford Lady Lavinia the opportunity of giving him her niece, before he took the liberty of taking her without permission.

As for Brag, when he sat down to breakfast, he was, as they say, “quite another guess sort of man” from what he had been; and as he swallowed his tasteless fish and unsatisfactory “broil,” every indignity which he had suffered during the preceding day rose in his mind. To think that the servant, whom he really had engaged, should be referred to, and even deferred to, in preference to himself; that although he had paid — or rather incurred — eight hundred pounds for the yacht, it should still be considered by his free-and-easy visitors as if it were still Captain Chipstead’s; that he should have been left on board for the second trip of the boat, when he certainly ought to have gone ashore with Lady Lavinia; that he should have been soused in the water, and carried “pickback” on shore by one of his own crew; and that Dr. Munx, of whom he had never heard before he saw him ready to eat his luncheon and drink his champagne — certainly not in infinitesimal quantities — should have made his own man laugh at him by making his own joke on his unpleasant condition,—were all

galling enough : but when the apprehension of the absolute necessity of giving a ball to a hundred people of whom he knew nothing upon earth, stared him in the face, poor Jack began to think that he had carried his joke a little too far.

Yet after all, Jack will not be a much greater fool than his neighbours in this respect, even if he consent to victimize himself in such a proceeding ; for, incredible as it may appear, the fact is, that within these few last years, instances have over and over again occurred, in which certain Nobodies, who happen to have fine houses, have been glad to let the few Somebodies they chance to know, invite the Everybodies of *their* acquaintance to balls and parties, in order to make a display ; and other cases in which, on the other hand, the Nobodies are permitted to borrow the fine houses of the Somebodies, in order to make the *fête* come reasonable to the noble owners, who are, of course, entitled to make their own party as they please.

Jack's temper, acidulated as it was, was

by no means mollified by the appearance of Hickman while he was breakfasting, with a list of things which he said were positively essential to the comfort of a yacht, which had not yet been provided ; nor was this new accession of ill-humour at all qualified by Mr. Hickman's intelligence, that Captain Hazleby's man had made out the said catalogue of comforts by his master's direction. Jack read the paper, and desired Hickman to leave it, resolving at all events to show his *own* servant that he was determined to judge for himself, — at the same time trembling inwardly lest by making any resistance to the importunities of Hazleby, he should subject himself to the fire of his ridicule, which he dreaded and detested as much as he did the pert satire of the odious Dr. Munx.

Scarcely had he swallowed his first cup of tea before a three-cornered note arrived from Lady Lavinia, begging to know at what time they were to be on board.

“ What does she mean ? ” thought Jack : —
“ on board ! What ! does she want to go again

to-day, after all the miseries we suffered yesterday?" This question, put to himself, was speedily answered by Hickman making his appearance to enquire how many were expected at luncheon. What could he say? What could he do? Here he was: — he had bought the yacht obviously to gratify this particular lady, who felt herself consequently bound to show her gratitude by earnestly patronizing it. In fact, he had at length gained the great object of his life,—he was literally sought and courted by an earl's daughter, who with that enviable rank, combined the more substantial attributes of a well-jointured widow. The consequences of this success it was as difficult for him to avert as it had been easy to foresee. A fish in the air, or a bird in the water, could not be more completely out of its element than Jack when he was in the society with which he was always anxious to mix: there is but one word conventionally used which aptly expresses his position under such circumstances, — he was regularly "*basketted*."

So long as horses and races, and gates and

fences, were the topics of conversation, so long could Jack carry on,—and the whole thing went smack, smooth, and no mistake; but the Isle of Wight was not a hunting country, nor did the sports of the field at all assimilate with the delicate sensibility of Lady Lavinia, who nevertheless felt grateful in the extreme for the absolute devotion of Mr. Brag to her will and wishes, which afforded so striking a contrast to the negative civility of the rest of the Cowes circle.

“Ask Bung,” said Jack to his servant, “what time we are to go; and I’ll write a note to Lady Lavinia to know how many I am to have to luncheon.”

“Her ladyship has sent Mr. Tackandtape, the upholsterer,” said Hickman, “to say that he can let you have every article of furniture,—forms, benches, tables, chairs, lamps, candlesticks—that you may want for the ball, and will be glad to supply you on the most moderate terms.”

“The ball!” said Jack—“what ball?”

“The ball you are going to give, sir,” said Hickman, “at Lady Wattle’s. Her ladyship’s

cook has been here this morning to tell me that he can manage the whole of the soups and anything hot in his own kitchen ; and that ——”

“ But I don’t know what you mean !” said Jack.

“ You settled it all yesterday, sir, on board,” said Hickman.

“ Did I ?” said Jack : — “ well, we’ll see about it to-morrow then. I — I’ll write to Lady Lavinia : — is her servant waiting ?”

“ Yes, sir,” said Hickman, — and retired.

Jack’s literary powers were not of the highest order. He wrote a note — tore it up : wrote another, — his great puzzle being as to the mode of spelling one or two words most essential to the perfection of his present communication ; those were, yacht and Psyche. There was a choice of evils, for either would answer his purpose ; but the alternative was no advantage : he spelt yacht, yott ; then he did not think that that looked right ; then he could not recall at the moment the regular mode of doing it, but established the spelling of a signboard in the street of Cowes to be *the*

thing — upon which, at *that* time, and maybe now, for all I know, the word was spelt yatch.

Psyche was metamorphosed into Physce, and ultimately made into Physic, but it would not do; and so, after spoiling some four or five sheets of note paper, inking the table-cloth, and the morning-gown, in which he was breakfasting, he rang the bell, and desired Hickman to tell Lady Lavinia's servant that he was too unwell to write, but begged her ladyship to make her own arrangements.

This message was scarcely delivered when two letters from London were delivered to Jack, exemplifying upon this special occasion the truth of the adage, that,—“misfortunes never come alone.” One was in a hand unknown to Jack, the other he at once recognised as having been written by his mother: there could be no doubt which of the two to open—that from the old lady could only contain family matters; what might be enveloped in the folds of the other epistle, he could not guess, and accordingly its bonds were burst, and Jack read as follows:—

Lincoln's Inn, August 17th.

“DEAR SIR,

“I hasten to inform you that the case — ‘Grindleston, *versus* Brag and others,’ was tried yesterday at Hertford, before Mr. Justice Dodo. The jury was composed of very intelligent respectable men; of course we had not the assistance of the counsel whom I named to you, inasmuch as they do not go circuit; but we had the leaders, and every exertion was made to secure a favourable result. I am sorry to say, as indeed I had the pleasure to mention to you when we were conferring on the subject I expected it to be, that the verdict was against the defendants, with fifty pounds damages.

“The conduct of the opposite party was marked by a very unnecessary degree of malignity. Plaintiff's counsel was instructed to go into matters with which, in my humble opinion, they had no business to meddle, and in fact adopted a course which I never could bring myself to recommend or advise, and it became perfectly evident to me, from the line taken,

that the whole weight of vindictiveness was to be thrown upon *you*, to whom the learned gentlemen on the other side made some most improper and uncalled-for allusions, founded, I have no doubt, either in malice or misinformation on the part of the Grindlestones.

“ I have written by this post to Lord Wagley, and shall forward the county paper of to-morrow, in which the trial will no doubt be fully reported.

“ I have the honour to remain,

“ Your faithful servant,

“ HENRY LEVERET.”

John Brag, Esq.

“ That’s a regular spill,” said Jack to himself. “ I wonder what the fellow said of *me* ;— couldn’t have hinted at my attempts to destroy Grindleston’s peace of mind ;— no fault of mine, it was all Mrs. G.’s doing, and no mistake ; only she got frightened, and so repented ; that’s all. Perhaps he gave some slap at the shop, shouldn’t wonder : and that infernal attorney to think of sending the report of the trial *here* ! I hope he’ll send it to *me*. I’ll

take care it goes no farther if he does ; fifty pounds damages,—five on us,—that's only ten a-piece. Then to be sure, there's the costs. Well, I'm going it now. However, I have got my three hundred pounds at my bankers—nest egg ; *that*, I won't touch, ' please the pigs,'—pay small bills in ready cash,—let the big ones wait. I'll do yet with Lady Lavinia's four thousand a-year ; but it strikes me that there's no time to be lost. If that infernal paper comes here to-morrow, I'm done, straight up, right down, and no mistake."

Having thus far soliloquised, he proceeded to open the second letter, and read,

No 71, Elysium Row, Brickfields, Pentonville.
(near the Gas-Works.)

" DEAR JOHN,

" I AM come up here for a change of hair, for I have been in a delcat state since we parted at Lewis ; and a pretty parting it was : and such a gurney nobody ever had in this precious world. I got wet to the skin on account of the rain, which powered torrens on me, and then I

went inside, and sat, and quite smoked in dry-in'. But I have such a tail for you. When we got to the place where they do the chops, two fine frizzlemegig dandies which had been in the inside of the coach, got out, and guv me and J. S. their places. In the coach was a midole age respectable-looken woman, which sot opposite me; and opposite J. S. sot a little French woman, with green speckteckles on, and so we went all sochable, and I had forty winks off to sleep, never a-dreaming of no nonsense of no kind, and we got safe to the 'Oliphant and Cassell,' and was put into what they call the branch coch, to take us to the citty; when, just as we was drivin off, the little mounsheer woman which wore the barnacles, whips them off her nose, and says to me, out of the window, says she, with the greatest imperence, 'Good day, Mrs. S.; when next you goes to the play I hopes you'll behave better.' Can't you guess who it was? Why, as true as I'm sitting here looking at the brick-fields, and smelling the gas for the benefit of my 'ealth, it was that monkified

Miss Ogg,—she, which played the nigger's wife the night before.

“I wur so mad with Jemes, I could have killed him; he swore till he was black in the face he did not know it himself, but I said to him, says I, ‘You must have knowed it was the minx's mother. She hadn't got no barnacles on.’ Whereupon he confessed he did know it, but thought I wur so wet I'd better get in, and it would have done all well enough, for I shud have knowed nothink about it if it had not been for her imperence which could not keep her secret to herself.

“Then Jemes up and told me that the tall dandy which got out when I got in, was a Mr. Somebody, who acted the nigger; which I could not bileeve, because he was as white as you are: but he swore to it, and told me that the way he made himself look black was by rubbin' his face over with pomatum and lamp-black, which I cannot bileeve, likewise, for it is so nasty. However, Jemes has behaved very well too me since, never mentions that cretur's name, and has taken me these nice

apartments, for wick we pay only five and twenty shillings a week, coals included, which I think moderate, for the hair is uncommon fine, and I have, besides the Gas Works, a beautiful view of the Kilns, and the Fever Hospital, which is quite close. Jemes comes home here as soon as he can in the evenings, except Saturdays, when he sleeps in town, as also on those days when he goes out for orders, for which purpose he has got a nice horse and shay, which, I am sorry to say, is of no use to me, because I cannot get into it on account of my leg.

“What I particlarly write to you about, is this:—we have had a good large order for articles to be sent to a Captain Wilford in Berkshire. They were staying at a hotel in town when the order come, and we know nothing of them. Jemes has just heard that they are at Cowes, and although you do not like business, he thought that, without putting yourself out of the way, you might just find out whether they are safe customers to deal with. A line at your earliest convenience will oblige.

“I have seen nothing of the fine Miss since we parted at the ‘Oliphant;’ and so I hope not to be made oneasy any more upon her account. I hope you are quite well, and happy ; I shall be very glad to see you when you come back to town. I have always something in the house here ; and the people are very civil, and will do up anything for you in a few minutes, come whenever you will.

“Your affectionate mother,

“E. SALMON.

“P. S. Their names is Wilford, and lives at Brunkton House, somewhere near Reddin. J. S. desires his regard, and to mention your bill for 500*l.*, doo 20th inst., which he has been obligated to pay away, and which, in course, must be paid.”

What the effect of these two letters was upon Brag’s temper and spirits, the reader may easily imagine. The intelligence from the lawyer he thought bad enough ; but that which he received from his respectable parent was even worse. In the first place, Jack had

cunning enough of his own, improved, as all his suspicions on the subject had been, by the conversation of Mrs. and Miss Hogg, at the Lewes playhouse, to be perfectly assured that the tender attentions of Mr. Salmon in establishing his drooping wife in the ready-furnished lodgings at Pentonville, were attributable rather to affection for somebody else, than for herself; and the establishment of the horse and shay, as his mother called it, into which, by some fortunate coincidence of circumstances, she could not get, was strongly corroborative of his worst suspicions. If Mrs. Salmon's "leg" prevented her taking exercise with her husband, Miss Hogg laboured under no such difficulty; and as to the orders, which the poor patient Griselda spoke about, he felt satisfied the only orders these excursions secured, were, orders for the playhouse at which Miss Roseville figured.

But then, in the second place, the idea of setting *him* to institute inquiries into the character and respectability of a family co-resident with himself at Cowes, in order that he might

report to Jem, whether he might trust them with so many pounds of candles or so many gallons of oil; and all this crowned by the observation contained in the pithy postscript about the five hundred pounds bill just coming to maturity. It was a sad damper, and Jack could hardly rally sufficiently to proceed, according to his promise, to Lady Lavinia's. The consequence of his delay in his visit was the following note from her ladyship, who began to apprehend that she had lost her dangler, or at least her influence over him.

“ DEAR MR. BRAG,

“ Where are you ? We are waiting for you. I have secured Captain Hazleby and our dear doctor for the cruise. Lady Wattle is not well, but Miss Wattle will go with us, and Captain and Mrs. Wilford, who are extremely anxious to make your acquaintance. They have a very nice place in Berkshire, and you must cultivate them. *I* like them; so must *you*. She sings beautifully, and is ravenously fond of the sea. You must have a guitar on

board. I don't think Mr. Selwyn will be able to go with us; however, do you come to me directly.

“Yours truly,

“L. NEWBIGGEN.”

This billet, shining like glass, and redolent of musk, added, if possible, to Jack's embarrassment. Here were the people named in his mother's question as to character, coming to him to eat the profits arising from the “articles” which they had ordered—actually to feast upon stores and moulds, and quench their thirst with lamp oil. In another shape, it is true. What could he do? Sham sick, as he often did at school;—let her ladyship and party enjoy the cruise and command the yacht. This he resolved to put into practice; and accordingly despatched an answer to her note, stating himself to be exceedingly ill, and unable to go to sea; and putting Psyche entirely at the disposal of her ladyship and party.

It must be confessed that the day opened gloomily; not perhaps meteorologically speak-

ing, but as far as Jack's own affairs were concerned. He felt anxious to have some conversation with Lord Wagley on the subject of the lawsuit, but somehow he fancied his lordship had not latterly evinced anything in the way of encouragement in his manner towards him, and did not like to take the liberty of writing to him to beg him to call at his lodgings.

Painful and disagreeable as were the letters Jack himself had received, it turned out that the communication which Leveret had by the same post made to Lord Wagley was of a nature likely more severely to damage our poor pretender. It contained a detail of the facts as they had really appeared on the trial, and of the virulent attack of the counsel, which contained all sorts of allusions to Brag's pretensions and assumptions, and some other remarks, in which his connexion with Lord Tom Towzle, another of the defendants, was mentioned in such a manner as to induce Lord Wagley to write that very evening to Lord Tom in Paris, to obtain an elucidation of the hints which he had thrown out in his communications with his

solicitor, who of course had been associated with Leveret in the conduct of the defence.

Lord Wagley felt, however, that common justice required him to make no marked alteration in his conduct towards Brag until he had ascertained the real history of the case, and therefore anticipated Brag's intention of inviting him to call, by making a visit in the course of the morning.

"Well," said his lordship, "our affair is settled, as you know."

"I have heard so from Leveret," said Jack. "He tells me, that I got a roasting from one of the lawyers: it's lucky if he don't get a basting from me."

"Oh," said his lordship, "nobody minds what is called forensic abuse; see how they abuse each other occasionally, denounce their learned friends as absolute blockheads, and carry a point by frightening an honest witness under cross-examination into telling the most egregious falsehoods for the furtherance of the ends of justice. Leveret has promised to send me down the report of the trial on Satur-

day, and I'll send it you the moment I have read it."

"I shall be obliged," said Jack.

"Pray," said Lord Wagley, *apropos* to nothing, "when did you see Towzle last?"

"Lord Tom?" said Jack.

"Yes."

"The last time," said Jack, "I dined in company with him was at Sir James Gunnersbury's at Dover. The last time I saw him, I was at luncheon with the Ilfracombes, where he came in and paid me a lump of money which he owed me—which, as I say, was all right up, straight down, and no mistake."

"Did not you tell me, when you first came here," said Lord Wagley, "that you were going to ride his horses at Paris?"

"Yes, in course," said Jack, getting particularly fidgetty at the nature of Lord Wagley's enquiries and the manner in which they were put.

"What made you throw him over?" said Lord Wagley; "he's a capital fellow in his way, and deuced fond of *you*."

“ Why,” said Jack, “ I’ll tell you, my lord. A sister of mine made an unlucky marriage some years ago, and died abroad ; and her husband I have been obliged to cut dead as mutton. And he and his second wife, and his sister — we needn’t enter into particulars — with whom I was once uncommon intimate, are in Paris ; and so I thought it would be as well not to risk falling in with them, which would, fifty to one, have ended in falling out ; so I told Lord Tom the truth, and he said I was quite right, and no mistake.”

“ Oh ! that was it,” said his lordship, affecting apparent satisfaction at the account. “ I could not think what could have induced you to disappoint him. Do you sail to-day ?”

“ I’m not well enough, my lord,” said Jack ; “ besides, I have some letters to write. The *Psyche* is going. Lady Lavinia has made her party, and they sail about one.”

“ Upon my word,” said Lord Wagley, “ my prophecy has come true ; ‘ The *Psyche* ’ has got a mistress. I knew how it would be.”

“ Yes,” said Brag, “ I think her ladyship

is hit hardish. A woman of her time of life wants somebody to keep her establishment going: we shall suit uncommon well; let her have her own way—at first at least. She likes *my* yacht now; I shall like *her* jointure by-and-by. I must marry off Fanny; Selwyn must have her: they love each other—why not?”

“Nothing, I believe, but the want of money stands in the way of it,” said Lord Wagley. “The death of Fanny’s mother and father left her with what is called a lady-like fortune of some five or six thousand pounds,—for, by some unaccountable oversight, no farther provision was made for her in anticipation of events which certainly were possible in any case, and under any circumstances, and which actually did occur in *hers*.”

“That’s hard,” said Jack, thinking at the moment that he had better change his policy with regard to the lovers whose cause he had espoused, inasmuch as if Selwyn should succeed in obtaining Lady Lavinia’s consent to the match, her ladyship, who, with all her fol-

lies and fantasies, was extremely fond of her niece, would in all probability follow up her acquiescence by the appropriation of some part of her income for their support. Lord Wagley's intelligence produced this revolution in his designs; and his lordship's manner during the explanation had the effect of checking Jack's volubility with regard to his certainty of marrying the Lady Lavinia, and his intentions as to the future arrangement of her property after he had attained it: in fact, he was conscious of a difference in the noble lord's behaviour, although the noble lord himself made every effort to prevent his observing any change; the very anxiety to appear natural and at ease gave an appearance of playing a game, which Jack saw, — did not quite understand, — but did not in the least admire.

After a few casual observations about "The Psyche," the weather, and whatever public news was stirring, his lordship took his leave, Jack feeling the influence of his increased formality and civility, to the extent of hindering him from, in the slightest degree, alluding to

the yet much-desired honour of admission into the Club.

To *him* succeeded, as a visiter to Jack, Selwyn himself, who came, of course, for an invitation to the yacht. Nobody who has not been really and truly in love, — and he who has, must not be now a very young man, since the sort of love of which I speak is altogether obsolete, — can possibly imagine the submissions, and degradations even, which a lover is willing to encounter and endure, when the result of his humiliation is the happiness which an hour, — a half, — a quarter, — ten minutes, — or even five, passed with her he loves, can confer. Selwyn, with *his* mind and genius, naturally laughed at poor Jack ; and as far as his yacht, his luncheons, his pretensions, and absurdities went, would rather have made him a subject for his pen than come to him as a petitioner, — but Fanny was to be of the party. By what means he had learned that Jack himself was not to be on board, it is impossible for us to ascertain ; and if it *were* possible, it would be “ vastly ungenteel ” to tell : the truth was,

that Selwyn *had* found out that Fanny was “going afloat,” as we say,—and that Jack was not : — what was he to do ?

“What ?” said Jack,—“go on board now ; sham waiting for *me*. I never told *you* I wasn’t coming, or going, or whatever it is : And I tell you what, S., the very best thing you can do is, if old Lavy, my lady, refuses her consent, run off with the girl. My yacht shall be ready any hour of the night ; slip you up to Southampton, or push you off to Portsmouth, smack smooth, right up, straight down, and no mistake.”

“You are too kind !” said Selwyn : “but then, you see, our means won’t bear us out in such a proceeding. My income is very small ; my literary trade—call it so — precarious ; and dear Fanny has scarcely anything but what her aunt, who loves *her* and hates *me*, may choose to give her.”

“I wouldn’t let that stand in the way,” said Jack ; “the old-’uns melt uncommon tender when the thing’s done. Take my advice,—bolt !”

“ I doubt,” said Selwyn, “ whether Miss Hastings would undertake such an expedition. It is a very important step, Mr. Brag, in a woman’s life, to discard relatives, friends, and connexions, and to break every old tie which binds her to her family, to make a new one. I—”

“ Why,” said Brag, “ I know the female sex ; and, as I have always said, a female is a female, which is something. That they are odd and strange-minded, nobody can deny ; but my belief is, that if you and she run off in couples, the whole thing will come right in the end. I, you know, care no more about that poor old body than you do. Don’t you see, she’s what I call over head and ears with me. As I told Waggy just now, I have bought the yacht to please her ;—and she *is* pleased, now she has got it all her own way. You trust to me ; I’ve nailed *her* ; you, in course, hate her : you take *your* way — I’ll take *mine*—eh ? Don’t you see, that’s all clear, and no mistake.”

Selwyn was rather startled by this loose morality of Jack’s, and really wondered to hear a

man talking so coolly, and calculating so coldly, upon the consequences and results of his already decided (in his own mind) marriage with Lady Lavinia. This struck him the more forcibly for two reasons:—first, because a true and poor lover, hearing marriage spoken of with any relation to money and advantages, feels in the highest degree indignant at such a discordant mixture of affection and interest; and secondly, because, however harsh the conduct of the mother, or aunt, or whatever she may be, of the creature he devotedly loves, may anger him or excite his resentment for the moment, still, the reflection that she *is* so closely allied to that creature, — the human divinity of his adoration, — softens down all that irritation, and he is ready to respect the guardian for the very care she takes of her matchless charge.

Jack, however, relieved from the over-awing presence of his friend Waggy, as he called him, let loose all his usual absurdity, and talked to Selwyn of “tickling the old trout,” “settling granny,” and many similar feats, equally well and elegantly expressed; adding to his

confident assurances of complete success, the whole history of the light-horse volunteer in the ebony case, and the beautifully illustrated pedigree of all the Newbiggens of Bumblesford, — upon both of which, having taste for neither arts nor arms, he was pleased to be particularly severe.

Selwyn was, to say truth, disgusted with the view with which his voluble friend had favoured him of his character and principles behind the scenes, and felt very much inclined to speak to him in terms, if not of disapprobation, at least of expostulation, with reference to the language he had adopted in speaking of the family to a member of which he was so much attached; but love gained the mastery over friendship, and, after a struggle highly honourable to Selwyn's feelings, he terminated the dialogue by thanking Jack for his hint as to going on board the yacht to wait for him, although he knew he was not coming, and in less than ten minutes after was installed in the cabin of "The Psyche," thinking it better to remain below till the arrival of the ladies, lest

his appearance on deck might raise an alarm in Lady Lavinia's mind, and induce her to re-land with her fair treasure, and, if she did not give up the excursion herself, leave Fanny "on the wild-sea banks," like Dido, with a willow in her hand "waving her love."

Jack, as soon as his visitor was gone, betook himself to the task (no easy one to him) of answering the letters which he had received, and which had so completely upset him: that to Mr. Leveret was as follows, and is highly indicative of the notion which Jack had established in his mind of the characters and customs of what are called legal advisers.

"DEAR SIR,

Cowes,—August 18—.

"YOURS of yesterday duly received. I thought, from what you said, we should be beaten. I don't mean to stand any nonsense; and if the lawyer who was on their side said anything disrespectful of *me*, I shall take care to make him unsay it, and no mistake. As I never like to be longer in debt than I can help, and prefer paying ready money, — short the

discount,—I will thank you to send me your little bill, and I will settle it forthwith.

“ Your obliged servant,

“ JOHN BRAG.”

This was sealed, and addressed to the solicitor, and likely enough it certainly was to astonish that gentleman when he received it. Jack calculated that the “ little bill ” would amount to perhaps ten or fifteen pounds, — at least his share, as he called it,—and therefore he thought it would sound mighty fine to flourish off about ready money, not in the slightest degree comprehending the difference which exists in society between transactions with traders, and business with professional gentlemen.

To his mother he wrote as follows : —

“ DEAR MOTHER, Cowes,—August 18, 18—.

“ YOUR’s came to hand to-day ; I hasten to answer it. I am getting on here in earnest. I have, what I call, fixed a title at last : she ’s an oldish one, but has hard upon four thousand a-year of her own. She has got a

great fancy for sailing, but the nobs which has yatches here won't have her aboard at no price ; so in course I thought the way to settle her was to get hold of a yatch of my own, which I did accordingly through Lord Wagley, a friend of mine, who will do anything I tell him ;—he franks this letter for you:—so I gave him my bill for the price of her, which is called “The Physce,” — eight hundred pounds, — whereat I see you stare like a stuck pig. I'm not so soft as you may fancy : if I marry the old one through having the yatch, it is quite worth the money ; and if I don't, the bill I have given, isn't particular likely to be paid : but this I don't care about, because, worse come to the worst, I can sell yatch before the bill comes due.

“ The old one has got a niece,—an uncommon pretty one to be sure,—and she's over head and ears, as I say, with a sort of a poetry-writing chap called Selwyn. The old one won't stand their marrying, because there is no stumpy neither side ; but I think, if he was once to coax and carney her over, she perhaps would make them an allowance and give her consent : so I am

putting him up to carry Miss Fanny off, and have offered to lend him my yatch, which, from what I have heard the old one say, will set her so against her niece, as nothing never was like it ; in which case I shall keep up her anger, and so there'll be nothing paid out of the jointure for them.

“ I don't belong to the Yatch Club here, because I like to be independent ; besides, I don't much like some of the people who are in it. They worry my life out to be one of them, but I sticks fast to my negative, and no mistake.

“ As to Captain and Mrs. Wilford, you may tell Jim, they are safe customers ; they are on board my yatch now, out sailing with my lady, —Lady Lavinia Brag as is to be ; in course they are respectable, or they would not be there.

“ As for Molly Hogg, don't you trouble your head about her ; she is not worth caring for. I am sorry your leg prevents you getting into the one-horse chay, because the country air would do you good. Rely upon it, I will come to see you the first minute I can after I

have led Lavy to the halter. I have got an excellent servant, who does for butler and valet all under one.

“ I haven’t heard anything more of Brown or the doctor. To be sure, Kitty’s affair was uncommon unfortunate ; only if Brown hadn’t married as he did, he would only have been a serjeant now, or perhaps been dead.

“ As for the five hundred pounds, I am sorry Jim has paid it away, for I shall not be able to take it up, inasmuch as it is impossible for me to get tacked to my granny till after that is due anyhow. I told you I’d do it at last, notwithstanding all the story Mrs. Cropper told Jim. I thought it best not to stop at Eastbourne, for, though I had been there so short a time, I saw people hinting and winking about me and Mrs. Peckover, which sat in the opposite box to us the night of the row at the playhouse ; and, though it was all nonsense, yet, when a female is concerned, it is best to be safe, and no mistake ; besides, Peckover, although a slow coach, is uncommon good-natured, and it wouldn’t be right to break his heart.

“ I hope you are happy. I think Jim is a right good fellow, and am glad you took him for better for worse. Am glad you like your lodgings, which certainly isn't dear at five and twenty shillings a-week, specially with coals included. I have told Wagley the direction—Pentonville, without mentioning the name of the row, or about the gas-works or brick-fields, because Pentonville is sure to find you, and ‘ row ’ looks low ; not that Waggy knows who you are ; because it is quite right not to let that cat out of the bag till I have got the other cat into it : so all snug, smug, and no mistake. I conclude you have painted the back-parlour, and shifted the copper by this time.

“ I have no more to say at present, but my best love. Hope I have written satisfactorily ; and remain, with best regards to Jim,

“ Your dutiful son,

“ J. B.”

This also, folded and sealed, was transmitted to Lord Wagley, with a request for a frank ; Jack's object being to clench the nail, as he

called it, with his mother and Jem, by getting a cover from a lord, which he fancied might operate upon the latter's mind, so as to induce him to renew the five-hundred pounds' bill, or at least not enforce the payment; while, his mother's name being now changed, he felt no difficulty in sending the address to his noble friend. The letter reached his lordship just as he was starting for his yacht, bound to Southampton; and, immediately upon receiving it, he sent word it should be done, and thrust it into his pocket.

In the yacht, and just before he reached Southton, Lord Wagley proceeded to fulfil his promise; and deceived by the illegibility of what Mrs. Brag called "Jack's pot-hooks and hangers," combined with a certain degree of obscurity in the cabin, his lordship wrote the address:

"Southton, August eighteen, 18—

"Mrs. Salmon,

"Petersham."

"Wagley."

And having thus accurately directed the tribute of filial affection, he tore up the "example," and despatched the epistle with his own letters to the post-office.

Jack having, what he called, cleared off business, began to reflect and consider, to the fullest extent of his capability for such a purpose. The note which Lady Lavinia had written to him upon hearing that he could not sail; the message that she hoped he would be well enough to come to hear some charming music in the evening,—that *the* Mrs. Captain Wilford would sing for him,—and that it should be quite snug and select,—all spoke to his too willing ear the language of devotedness: and then to think that this very lady who was to sing for him was the very lady about whose solvency for the amount of a box of candles he had been commissioned by his mother to inquire; and then to think of the certainly altered behaviour of his friend "Waggy," and to doubt about what the lawyer had said to him; and then to fear the communication which might, and most probably would,

take place between "Waggy" and Lord Tom, in consequence of their being associated with him as defendants in the case,—all combined to harass and fever him, and at the same time to assure him that, let him take what course he might with regard to his projected alliance with her ladyship, he had no time to lose.

Therefore was it that he resolved, *coute qui coute*, to present himself at her ladyship's little party, which, if "Psyche" contrived to get back from Portsmouth, whither she was gone, in time, would be, no doubt, extremely agreeable. Thus determined, he ventured forth in the afternoon to take a stroll towards Egypt, during which he might revolve all his various plans in his mind, so that he might regulate by his own decision of the day, his proceedings in the course of the evening.

CHAPTER VII.

DURING the period of suspense which must naturally intervene, under any circumstances, between the departure and return of a yacht from Cowes, professing a voyage to Portsmouth, it may, perhaps, be as well to let the reader know something of those personages of our drama, who, in its earlier part, were prominent characters, and who, owing to the management of one of the party, first caused the explosion of Brag's absurdity, without a match.

The agreeable Mrs. Dallington, and the lovely Blanche Englefield, as Mrs. Cropper the housekeeper informed Mr. Salmon, had become—"nothing loath,"—the respective wives of Sir Charles Lydiard and Mr. Francis Rushton. Sir Charles and his lady passed the honeymoon at his place in Gloucestershire; Rushton and

his bride went, as the 'world' will go, to Paris: and never were four people more entirely changed by the relative change of their several conditions than this *parti carré*.

Lydiard, once in possession of the kind-hearted widow, doubted no longer. Convinced by the unreserved communication of thoughts, and opinions, to which the character of husband entitled him, of her single-mindedness, and unqualified affection and esteem for him, all the doubts which disturbed, and all the fears which alarmed him, were banished from his mind: while Rushton, convinced of the purity and excellence of his blushing Blanche, felt no longer irritated, or peevish, if she chanced to bestow a passing smile upon another; perfectly assured by an intimate acquaintance with her sterling good qualities, that she would never have accepted him, spite of her own knowledge of the little irregularities of his temper, had she not meant to bind him to herself by ties of affection and tenderness, which to a heart ardent as Rushton's was, must be invincible and irresistible.

So here, then, were reduced, in four short weeks, two turbulent spirits, either after his own fashion ; and the nervous suspicious lover, and the fiery doubting suitor, subdued into two as happy husbands as ever entered the holy state of matrimony.

Thus it is :—a lover must be jealous of the object of his affections ; because, in that state of probation in which a lover is doomed to live, there can be no love without jealousy : but when once the beloved one becomes a wife, the signs of jealousy on the part of her husband are both disgusting and degrading ; degrading to himself, as implying a conscious inferiority ; and disgusting, because it betrays a suspicion that his wife will practically evince her consciousness of that inferiority by preferring somebody else to *him*.

Fuller says, “ Where jealousy is the jailour, many break the prison, it opening more wayes to wickednesse than it stoppeth ; so that, where it findeth one, it maketh ten dishonest.” And so it is. What does the generous, while yet

untainted Othello say?—*he* who, as Mrs. Salmon described him, was “as black as my hat, and a nigger into the bargain.”

—————’Tis not to make me jealous,
To say my wife is fair, feeds well, loves company,
Is free of speech, sings, plays, and dances well :
Where virtue is, these are more virtuous.
Nor from mine own weak merits will I draw
The smallest fear, or doubt of her revolt,
For she had eyes, and chose me.

As Rushton had no very particular friend to act Iago, he contented himself upon Shakspeare’s principle; and the jealousy, which none can separate from love during a long and anxious courtship, was buried at the foot of the altar at which he made her his wife. Nothing in truth could be more perfectly happy than Lydia and Rushton; and nothing connected with their felicity would have interfered to disturb the resolution of Brag to be “everything in the world,” and Lady Lavinia’s husband into the bargain, but the appalling fact that Sir Charles and his Lady, and Mr. and Mrs. Rushton, had emerged from their sweet solitudes into

the world at Ryde, which very watering-place had been fixed as their rendezvous at the end of the double honeymoon.

This, Jack certainly did not know, nor in the slightest degree did he anticipate such a *contretemps* while he was lounging "the sultry hours away," during the voyage of "Psyche" to Portsmouth. However, these curious coincidences will occur, however particularly disagreeable their occurrence may be. Still, there is nothing in the world so silly as discounting grievances; when they come due, it is quite time enough to honour them, and pay the amount: so, even if Jack *had* known that his "love's bitter foes" were at Ryde, he would not have agitated himself unnecessarily until they had, by some accident, arrived at Cowes.

It is not to be denied that Jack felt himself more comfortable, and more at ease, strolling about upon the beach, than he was at any period of the previous day on board his yacht; and he pictured to himself the gratification he should experience in seeing her enter the har-

bour, her taunt mast “towering to the skies,” and her ample main-sail swelling to the breeze.

Yet in the midst of these higher aspirations Jack could not altogether avoid the recollection of his earlier days and associations. He began to worry himself now about his sister’s fate and death, to fidget himself about his mother’s marriage, and even feel something like a regret about Anne ; it was, “in course,” no use minding it now ; but it all came into his head as he sat watching the waves rolling in upon the shore.

With regard to his yacht, Brag’s vanity was amply gratified by her appearance, beating up from Portsmouth,—wind being as per last ; but the day was bright and clear, and as he watched her buffeting the waves he said to himself, “That’s *my* yacht ;” which being, in point of fact, almost the only thing he ever could call his own, was a very gratifying soliloquy. He waited until she neared the harbour, and then proceeded to his lodgings, not wishing to be seen by his guests on their land-

ing; inasmuch as the wags, if they pounced upon him at once, might fancy his indisposition feigned, or at least construe it into an indisposition to a second voyage.

The party had not long deposited themselves in their respective homes, before Lady Lavinia's attentions to the little man were renewed in the shape of a note of enquiry after his health, and containing a line in the way of postscript, to inform him that having found two friends of hers, at Portsmouth, who were coming to the island, she had ventured to give them, and one or two of their servants, a passage in "The Psyche." "I hope," added her ladyship, "you will not be angry with me for having taken this liberty. I think, if you even are so now, you will forgive me when you come here this evening, for they are, I find, people whom you know. I hope you are busying yourself about our dance; I will not terrify you by calling it a ball. Lady Wattle will be here to meet you, and we have arranged everything;—it must be Tuesday,—remember

that. I have made out a list of the people to have; here short notice only is required, the shorter the better, however. It comes as a surprise, and people like it; and we are all so snug. I only wish my cottage were large enough to manage it here. *Au revoir,*" &c. &c.

"I'm in for the ball," said Jack,—“that's clear enough, and *no* mistake. I wonder how long this is to last before I may venture to hint my intentions in regard of the match; and I wonder who the deuce my two friends who came up with some of their servants in my yacht may be. I wanted no friends to come here; — Stiffkey and young Gunnersbury perhaps; or Brown and his wife; or perhaps that sour-faced doctor that's married to Nancy. I don't think I'll go to the old woman's to-night:—see what the morning will do.”

Jack puzzled himself a good deal how to act in this emergency: if it were any of the people who first came into his mind who had arrived, a meeting with them would be utter annihilation. Why the deuce hadn't my lady

said at once *who* they were? Stiffkey would sink him at the first shot,—not to speak of the I. O. U. Gunnersbury would insult him. It could not be Lord Tom himself. At all events, go he would not,—go he could not; and therefore, in order to guard himself from any surprises of that sort, he wrote, as well as he could, a little answer to Lady Lavinia's note, saying he found himself so ill that he had been obliged to go to bed; and lest any extraordinary measure of her ladyship's kindness might convict him of evasion or deceit, he forthwith proceeded to disrobe and retire to his couch; thus punishing himself, for the sake of keeping out of the way of an apprehended detection for a few hours. The next day must unearth him; for whoever his friends were, the very fact of his indisposition would bring them to see him. It mattered not; he had not nerve to face the danger, and so the note was despatched immediately: and as Hickman had not yet come on shore from the yacht, his master was snugly deposited on his couch, all ready

to act the invalid “smack, smooth, and no mistake.”

The note had not been gone more than half an hour before Jack’s ears were assailed by the noise of feet ascending the stairs of his domicile. This announcement of approach was speedily followed by a smart tapping at the bedroom door. Jack heard it all; but as to the doomed culprit every minute is precious, he affected not to be aware of what was happening. The knock was repeated, and Brag felt it was useless to try any longer to stave off the visiter, whoever he might be; and a “come in,” uttered in a tone of voice which sounded very much like the negative invitation sometimes given to a bore, of “you won’t stay and dine with us,” was followed by the irruption into his apartment of Heneage Peckover, of Womanswould in the county of Kent, Esq.

“Why, Brag, my boy,” said the squire, “what’s the matter? Lady Lavinia is all in a stew about you — eh! — so Mrs. Peckover told me to come and inquire after you, and thank

you for our passage up from Portsmouth, and for some deuced good luncheon, which we got on board your yacht."

"My dear sir," said Jack, "how are you? I'm very glad to see you:" which was not altogether untrue,—for there were many other persons who would have been infinitely more unwelcome. "I'm uncommon ill: caught cold yesterday, I take it."

"Deuced sorry for that," said the squire. "You must rally and rouse; only don't come out in the evening if you think it's cold:—nurse. As Mrs. Peckover says, one day's penance is no great sacrifice; and Lady Lavinia agrees with her that you had better not think of coming to her to-night; she has written to you, she says."

"Yes," said Jack; "I have answered her *billy-do*,—asking me to come."

"I know," said the squire; "and I have brought you a billy don't, to tell you not to go. — Ha, ha, ha! I made that joke myself; and Mrs. Peckover tells me it's as old as the

hills. I don't care — I don't trouble my head with those sort of things: however, you'll come after breakfast to-morrow. Mrs. Peckover is very anxious to be introduced to you."

Now this was a fact, and is only a proof of that curious sympathy which prevails amongst women, even to a somewhat advanced period in life. Mrs. Peckover had taken the most unqualified aversion from Jack, only from seeing him at a distance, and knowing that he was one of her husband's "cockney friends," — a description associated in her mind with everything coarse and disgusting, and which kept them, as we have already seen, proscribed from what she called *her* circle.

During the voyage from Portsmouth, Lady Lavinia had spoken of Jack in terms which at once released him from the stigma which the lady so generally cast upon the Nimrods of Cockaigne with whom her good-natured husband was so constantly in the habit of making acquaintance; nor were the favourable opinions of her ladyship at all weakened in Mrs. Peck-

over's estimation by the appearance of "things in general" connected with our hero. The yacht itself and its appointments bespoke the man; and having admitted all the propositions of Lady Lavinia with regard to him, she concluded their conversation by expressing her pity and commiseration for his unhappy position at the Lewes play, where, by some strange accident, he had become involved in the most disagreeable circumstances, all of which she described with the greatest possible point and the minutest accuracy.

"Mrs. Peckover," said the squire, "has been telling Lady Lavinia all the history of the old mad-woman at the playhouse at Lewes, and made her ladyship laugh immoderately."

"She has, has she?" said Jack to himself.

"Who the deuce was the woman?" continued the squire: "Mrs. Peckover wants to know if you ever found out."

This was beyond his hopes; the real fact was not known, after all.

"Found out!" said Jack — "not I. Didn't you?"

“No,” said the squire. “Mrs. Peckover got rather unwell at the play after you had been driven away, and so Lady Patcham insisted upon her going back and sleeping at her house; and we didn’t go to the inn, else we might have known, I dare say.”

“Oh!” said Jack, forgetting rather too much that he was an invalid, “you didn’t go back to the inn?”

“No,” said the squire. “Mrs. Peckover got a bed at Lady Patcham’s, and I slept upon some chairs in the library. The house was crammed full of people. However, I don’t care for that sort of thing. Ha, ha, ha! Besides, as Mrs. Peckover says, there’s nothing like light and shade in this life. You never enjoy comfort half so much, if you are always comfortable, as you do if you rough it sometimes.”

Jack’s satisfaction at the happy state of ignorance in which Peckover and his lady were still involved, was so great, that he began to regret having taken fright at the approach of his unknown friends; nor was he much less pleased at hearing that they had seen nothing

of his friend Colonel Stiffkey, who had returned to Eastbourne only for one day, and had proceeded on a tour along the coast, with his friend Mr. Gunnersbury. "Mrs. Peckover, I believe," added the squire, "thinks there is a chance of their coming here, which will be very pleasant, because she likes the colonel mightily. He is a great amateur artist; and she admires pictures, and prints, and all that. For my part, I don't care much about such things. Ha, ha, ha!"

Peckover prolonged his visit to Brag, and talked over the only subject upon which the little man could talk, and spoke enthusiastically of the fine runs he anticipated in the coming season, and gave an animated description of the horses, "black, white, and grey," which he had in his stable, until the maid-servant of the lodging came into the room to announce that one of Mrs. Peckover's footmen was below, and wished to speak to his master.

"Bid him come up," said the squire.

He did come up.

"Well, what is it, Stephen?" said Peckover.

“My mistress has sent me, sir,” said Stephen, “to say, that if you don’t come to dress directly, you will be too late for dinner.”

“Odds bobs!” said the squire. “Who’d have thought it: how time flies in pleasant company! I’ll be home instantly. Go on first; tell Mrs. Peckover I’m coming as fast as I can: so, so! Well, Mr. Brag, I shall make a favourable report, and say you’ll be with Lady Lavinia after breakfast. Good day,—good day! Dear me! only think of the time!”

And away hurried the gentle giant, leaving Brag in almost as great a perplexity as that in which he found him. The escape about his mother’s exposure was a great relief; so was the circumstance of Stiffkey’s sudden departure from Eastbourne. But then, the impending threat of his visit to the island was a complete set-off in the account against those. In fact, look which way he would, Jack felt that expedition was essential to his success, and that no time was to be lost.

As soon as Peckover was well clear of his lodgings, Brag got up and dressed himself,

being now secure against farther interruption ; and resolved to make a dinner, if Hickman would permit him to do so, upon some of the innumerable remnants of the luncheon of which Peckover had spoken so highly ; and having, without the aid of his valet-butler, butler-valet, completed his toilet as far as he intended, and seated himself on his little sofa, in his dressing-gown and slippers, he rang the bell, and summoned that minister to his presence.

“ Hickman,” said Jack, “ I fancy I could eat some dinner ;—something cold, I should prefer,—eh ? ”

“ I don’t think, sir,” said Hickman, “ there is anything cold in the house.”

“ What ! have they cleared off the luncheon ? ” said Jack, “ eh ? entirely,—smack, smooth, and no mistake ? ”

“ No, sir,” said Hickman, shaking his head with a sort of half *dégagé*, half diplomatic wriggle ; “ but then we never bring away anything from the yacht. The captain and the crew consider——”

“Consider!” said Jack. “Why, haven’t they got plenty of salt-beef, pork, and the deuce knows what, to eat?”

“Those are for long voyages, sir,” said Hickman: “but there really was very little left; and I—— It isn’t usual, sir.”

“Oh!” said Jack. “Well, if it’s right, it’s right; and what’s right can’t be wrong: so there’s an end of that, and no mistake. Get me something then to eat.”

“Something plain, sir?” said Hickman, “a——”

“Yes,” said Jack.

“Will you have a *perigoo*?” said Hickman. “I can get that in a minute.”

“Any eggs and bacon?” said Jack.

“Sir!” said Hickman, looking aghast.

“Something nice, and not common,” said Brag. “I’m peckish.”

“A *salade à volaille*?” said Hickman.

“Oh, anything,” said Jack, “only let it be quick; for my headache is gone, and I want to eat.”

Hickman, who was an admirable servant in

his way, and who knew every turn and twist of Cowes, was not long in preparing a nice little repast for his eccentric master ; who, however ready and willing, when he was out hunting, to take a snack without a table-cloth, had no dislike to see his “ feed,” as he called it, put down all sweet, and clean, and no mistake.

In half an hour, a cloth, like unsunned snow, set off to the best advantage a remarkably nice little dinner ; and Jack, growing bold by experience, ordered himself a bottle of the champagne which was so extremely popular on board the yacht. This, a pint of sherry, and, as he proposed, a bottle of claret to wind up with, were the liquids he selected to imbibe ; and, bating the visions of the colonel and the young bombardier, Jack was as brisk and as gay as

“ Jove, in his chair,
Of the sky, lord-mayor ;”

and dismissing Hickman from attendance, he poured glass after glass down his throat, each bumper adding to his resolution to pop the question to my lady without further delay,—

having been acquainted with her certainly less than three weeks, his pretensions, however, having been, it must be owned, considerably encouraged during that period by the bright sunshine of her ladyship's eyes.

By about nine o'clock Jack had drank himself into a beautiful state of mystification. He had lost sight of the colonel and Gunnersbury, and had reached a sort of seventh heaven of Orlebarism: he had begun to soliloquize aloud, —certain evidence of his real state,—and had nearly

“Screwed his courage to the sticking-place”

with regard to Lady Lavinia, when a rapid, rattling rat-tat-tat at the house-door set him wondering. His doubts were speedily dispelled; for in two minutes after the noise had ceased, Peckover stood before him.

He saw the vision — or rather two — with surprise and horror: here was the man who had left him in bed ill, sick, and wretched,—the very emissary who bore his tale of woe, —returned to find him not only excessively jolly, but having on his table the dreadful

evidence of "foregone conclusions" — bottoms of bottles; the spiry champagne, the yet distinguishable sherry, and the tall Chateau Margot, were all before him. What was to be done?

"My dear Brag," said the squire, "I'm delighted! Quite right?—up again and thriving! I'm right glad to see what I do. Deuced pleasant little party at Lady Lavinia's: but Mrs. Peckover told me that I ought to come down and see how you were, and sit with you a bit. They are all acting charades, and singing, and playing, and all that; but you know, as Mrs. P. says, I don't trouble my head with those sorts of things—ha, ha, ha!—so I am come to do a bit of cozey with you."

"I'm delighted," said Jack, "and no mistake. What will you have, squire—something hot, sweet, and strong, as the old women say?"

"Don't mind if I do," said Peckover. "Mrs. Peckover says spirits are injurious; but I don't mind—ha, ha, ha! The women don't

like men to drink; it keeps them away from them. However, I'm here upon what I call duty—ha, ha, ha! —and deuced pleasant duty too.”

“In no time,” as Jack would have expressed it, brandy, &c. and hot water, lemons and sugar, and everything else in the world, were put down, and the squire and Jack *tête-à-tête*; Jack, however, having got considerably the start of his friend, and being more communicative and inquisitive than perhaps he would have been had he not strictly adhered to the rules of the Temperance Societies, just now so much in fashion, which add hypocrisy to sensuality, and render that, which has hitherto been a social failing, a solitary vice.

“Lady Lavinia,” said the squire, “has made out a list of the people for your ball Tuesday. Mrs. Peckover tells me that you have got the credit of ‘going it’ here, and that all the women are in love with you — ha, ha, ha! I never trouble my head with that sort of thing—but so they say.”

“Why,” said Jack, “I believe there is something in that. They are uncommon good-natured,—eh?—you know, and no mistake.”

“The ball is fixed for Tuesday, Mrs. Peckover tells me,” said Peckover.

“Oh!” said Jack, “it is, is it?—umph!”

“I say, Brag,” continued the squire, “Mrs. P. thinks that you and my lady are likely to—eh?—put your horses together, as we say; don’t you understand? She is all agog about you; and—so—ha, ha, ha! I never mind those sort of things myself; but only—Oh! they do like these *fêtes* and yachts—eh?—and the flirt-ings, as they call them.”

“Why,” said Jack, “I own I think Lady Lavinia—eh?”

“Think!” said the squire—“Mrs. Peckover is sure—what I call cock-sure—and I’m glad of it. A nice place she has got down in our part of the country, and all snug.”

“Straight up, right down,” said Jack, “and no mistake?”

“Four thousand a-year, Mr. Brag,” said Peckover; “at least so Mrs. Peckover tells me.”

“ But,” said Jack,—“ help yourself, squire, — what do you think of Mr. Selwyn and Fanny? Was *he* there this evening? — he was with you in the yacht.”

“ Why, Mrs. Peckover thinks him clever,” said the squire. “ He is desperately in love, she says, with Fanny Hastings. I never trouble my head with those sorts of things—ha, ha, ha!”

“ But how,” said Jack, “ if she was to marry Selwyn without my lady’s consent?”

“ Wouldn’t give her a farthing,” said Peckover; “ at least so Mrs. P. assures me.”

“ Not if they were to — what d’ye call the thing?” said Jack.

“ What?” said the squire.

“ Hop the twig,” said Jack. “ I forget what the genteel word is — go to Scotland, or somewhere: *helope*, that’s it.”

“ Never see her again,” said Peckover.

“ Deuced good plan for me to get him to go,” said Jack.

“ Only it would break Lady Lavinia’s heart,” said Peckover; “ at least so Mrs. P. insinuates.”

“ Well,” said Jack, “ but how long does it take to break a female’s heart ?”

“ Can’t say,” said Peckover ; “ never trouble my head much about those sorts of things — ha, ha, ha ! Dare say you know better than *me*.”

“ Why,” said Jack, looking excessively cunning, getting exceedingly tipsy, and being uncommonly impudent, “ between you and me and the post, I flatter myself I do, and *no* mistake.”

“ However,” said Peckover, “ Mrs. P. told me to show you the list of the company invited : — Lady Wattle — but that you know — gives you her house, and Lady Lavinia has sent out the invitations — not more than seventy altogether. Mrs. P. says she has written off to Stiffkey, who, since I was here, she has found out is actually at Ryde ; and here,” continued the squire reading, “ are sixty-one down. From Ryde, there are the Lydiards and the Rushtons, great friends of my wife — two sisters ; she says they are charming people : — Gunnersbury, and two or three of his cronies :

— and Lord Wagley told Lady Lavinia that he had every reason to hope that Lord Tom Towzle, a particular friend of yours,” he says, “ would be here from Paris before that—comes by Dieppe to Brighton. I forget all the names, for I don’t trouble my head much with those affairs.”

“ Very pleasant,” said Jack ; “ eh ? — Tuesday ? ”

“ Yes, so Mrs. Peckover tells me,” said the squire, “ and they have arranged the whole thing. Your butler, who was on board the yacht, seems a capital servant : Mrs. P. says that he understands the thing perfectly, and has made every arrangement in the best possible manner. I never care much about those things myself — ha, ha, ha ! ”

“ ‘ Gad ! ’ ” said Jack musingly, “ that ’ s pleasant. Well, however, there are six days between this and Tuesday. Squire, will you have a cigar ? ”

“ Why,” said Peckover, “ if I thought Mrs. Peckover would be gone to bed before I got back.”

“ Stay till you are sure,” said Jack.

“ Because she can’t bear the smell of tobacco,” said the squire.

“ Never mind,” said Brag; “ you can say you were sitting up with a sick man — eh?”

The squire had arrived at an amiable point of readiness to do anything that was proposed, and Hickman was summoned. Cigars were produced, and the squire and Jack began their fumigatory proceedings. More brandy was required, and the two worthies continued until past two o’clock in the morning blowing their clouds, and opening their hearts to each other in the most entirely confidential manner; which sweet communings might have been of the most seriously disadvantageous consequence to either or both of them, had it not been that when Mrs. Peckover’s servant came to call home his master, neither he nor his sprightly host were sufficiently clear in their intellects to know what they had been saying for three hours before; and when they woke in the morning, what had occurred during the latter part of their *sederunt* was all irrevocably lost and forgotten.

Hickman, however, that invaluable treasure of a servant—the always-to-be-trusted with untold gold—was not guilty of any such omission: sober and discreet, and ever alive to his own interests, he drew a chair to the outside of the door of the little drawing-room in which his master and his friend were ensconced, and there heard the whole of the confidential interchange of facts, feelings, and opinions, which neither of the actors themselves recollected when they rose; but which decided Mr. Hickman in the opinion that his master was “no go,” and that the squire was, as his master had called him, a “slow coach.”

One thing, however, remained indelibly fixed upon Brag's mind when daylight and reason returned,—one object which had outlived all the revelry, and maintained its place amidst all the spirits and smoke, and confidences and communications,—the list of people invited by Lady Lavinia to the projected ball. What was to be done?—the thing was inevitable: he had surrendered the sceptre into the hands of Lady Lavinia, she had issued her commands,—six days

only intervened. His course was clear—he must draw her into a committal of herself to him before that evening came: once accepted, he might laugh at the malice of his envious revilers. If absolutely necessary, he would fight one of them,—this resolution only flitted through his mind; but, at all events, if the “old one” said “yea,” he cared little or nothing for all the rest.

Jack, however, as the reader knows, was an infinitely cleverer person at saying than doing; and although he had made up his mind for “immediate action,” the indiscretion of the evening had actually produced the illness he had only feigned before; and the poor little man completely knocked up by the “excess,” which, not in the slightest degree affected Peckover, was forced to remain *perdu* the whole of the next day, during which he was honoured by a visit from Lady Lavinia, who called to enquire after his health, attended by her “Tail,” as she was proceeding to embark in “The Psyche,” which again was ordered to sea, under her ladyship’s command,—victualled as before by Mr. Hickman.

The circumstances connected with Jack's real illness were luckily not known to Lady Lavinia; since Peckover would not, upon any consideration, have communicated to Mrs. P. the excesses which led to it, and in which he had so joyously participated. His non-appearance, therefore, on the Wednesday was attributed only to a continuation of his indisposition, and as Hickman was not likely to get anything by betraying the secret, he did not volunteer an explanation, nor, as his friends had the usufruct of his yacht, and the agreeable et-eteras, nobody took the trouble to make any very particular enquiries.

The next day, found Johannes redivivus. Jack was all right, and no mistake; his headache was gone, and the rose, which had given place on his cheek to the lily, bloomed all fresh and healthy; and

“Richard was himself again!”

It was a beautiful morning, and all nature looked cheerful; but as it grew later, it became somewhat overcast, at least as far as Brag was concerned: just as he had ordered breakfast,

the sound of the bugle announcing the arrival of the post, rang through his ears: the promise of the lawyer to transmit the county newspaper containing the report of the trial flashed into his mind, and after a sickening suspense of nearly half an hour, Hickman announced that there was nothing for him by post, thus releasing him from his doubts, and satisfying an anxiety about "his letters" which he had never evinced before, but exhibited upon this occasion; much indeed to Hickman's surprise, who of his own knowledge knew that since he had been in his new master's service he had received only two.

After having obtained this reprieve, Jack, consoling himself upon the principle "that no news is good news," began to brush up; and resolved to make an early visit to Lady Lavinia, in order to show that, the moment he had recovered from his indisposition, he flew upon the wings of love to

"——— do as was his duty,
Honour the shadow of her shoe-tie."

But alas! the avalanche was already detach-

ed from the mountain, and hung over Jack's head suspended but by one huge icicle, which this noon-day's sun would infallibly thaw. The Damoclesian sword, however, was still invisible to *him*, who, with his little legs horizontalized on his lodging-house sofa, "a world too" short for any animal of greater length than himself, sat sipping, in all the security of self-satisfaction, some *café au lait* of Hickman's *fabrique*; when to his surprise, and perhaps, dismay, he received from the hands of the said Hickman a large paquet, which had arrived per mail, although not per post, addressed to "John Brag, Esq." with the three honorary &c. &c. &c. "Cowes."

Jack opened the despatch with an air of importance which might have been supposed appropriate to a secretary of state of other days, when secretaries of state had something to be proud of. He found it to contain an extremely plump lump of paper, with a small note on its outside, looking like the pilot-fish on the nose of the shark, while he is prowling for prey in the blue waters.

The pilot he opened, and read :—

Lincoln's Inn, August 19th 182—

“ SIR,—Wholly unaccustomed to communications of such a nature as that with which I have this day been favoured by you, I have, according to your desire, transmitted my bill, and beg respectfully to decline any further interference with your affairs. I am, Sir,

“ Yours, H. LEVERETT.”

“ His back's up, I shouldn't wonder,” said Jack ; “ that's a pretty go — who cares ? let's look at his account ;” and accordingly out it came,—and thus it ran :

“ JOHN BRAG, ESQ.

To HENRY LEVERETT.
£ s. d.

August 2.—Attending you, and conferring with you as to the case of Grindlestone versus Brag and others, and taking your instructions thereon 13 4

Same day.—Writing to you on the same subject 6 8

Same day.—Writing to Messrs. Tapps, Tatlock, and Shackleton, to inform them that you had put the case into my hands, recapitulating to them your observations upon the same 13 4

August 3.—Attending you at your lodgings, advising and conferring on the circumstances

	£	s.	d.
attending the case, and taking further instructions thereon		6	8
<i>Same day.</i> —After luncheon, attending you before the Yacht Club-house rails, and stating to you that I had written a letter to Messrs. Tapps, Tatlock, and Shackleton	13	4	
<i>Same day.</i> —Before dinner, attending you, and conferring with you about the purchase of the yacht “Psyche,” in which you expressed your wish to purchase her for reasons then specified, namely, that you desired to become a member of the Royal Yacht Club, and could not belong to that society without being the owner of a yacht of more than 40 tons	13	4	
<i>Same day.</i> —In the evening, attending you, when you resumed the discussion, and I stated I thought, as it was growing late, you had better postpone it till the morning	13	4	
<i>Same day.</i> —After supper, attending you home, when you repeated the opinions you had previously stated, and I repeated my previous disinclination to go into anything like business until the next day	13	4	
<i>August 4.</i> —To writing you a letter, begging you to fix a time when I might attend you to confer upon the propriety of the purchase of the yacht “Psyche”	6	8	
<i>Same day.</i> —To perusing and considering your answer	6	8	
Paid messenger to carry ditto	2	0	
Ditto ditto to bring back answer	2	0	

	£.	s.	d.
<i>Same day.</i> —Calling on you at two o'clock, when you were out, enquiring of your serv- ant-maid where you were, and receiving her answer that she really did not know		13	4
Attending Lord Wagley, at your desire, to make necessary enquiries about the “Psyche,” which you had expressed a wish to pur- chase; when his lordship explained to me all the circumstances of the sale, and the reasons why Captain Chipstead, who had married Miss Allanby, of Twisterly, daugh- ter of Lieutenant-colonel Allanby, did not receive the amount of fortune which he ex- pected with her when he made her an offer, and reading over a long correspondence between her guardians and Captain Chip- stead on the subject, with a view to ascer- tain the reasons why the “Psyche” was sold at a price so much below her real value	1	1	0
<i>Same day.</i> —Writing you a long letter, stating to you all the circumstances which transpired during this long conference		13	4
Messenger		2	6
<i>August 5.</i> —Writing to Messrs. Tapps, Tatlock, and Shackleton, to acknowledge the receipt of their letter acknowledging the receipt of mine		6	8
Attending you on board the “Psyche” and a long conference with regard to the fittings and furniture thereof		13	4
Looking over the inventory of her stores, as delivered over by Captain Chipstead		6	8

	£	s.	d.
Comparing ditto with the stores themselves	6	8	
Copy of ditto for you to keep	6	8	
Attending you in a walk towards Newport, and conferring at length with you upon the question whether a yawl-rig was better than a cutter-rig, of which your Captain, Bung, had spoken when we were on board; in the course of which conference you men- tioned to me that you did not know the difference, and I stated that I was totally ignorant of the subject altogether	13	4	
To enquiring, at your desire, of the turnpike- keeper on the Newport road, which was the nearest way to Northwood church	3	4	
To attending you with his answer thereon, that we must go across the fields to the left, which lead down towards the river	3	4	
Writing you a letter, stating how sorry I was to be obliged to decline accepting your invitation to dinner, being engaged to go to Ryde upon professional business	6	8	

“ Well,” said Jack, when he had read thus far; “ this is going it. I ’ve heard a good deal of this sort of thing, but I never saw it before:” and getting extremely tired with the details, he ran his eye “ slap down,” as he would have said, to the bottom of the last page of the bill, the “ tottle of the whole” of which, amounted to something above one hundred and thirty pounds,

including nearly four hundred items much like those already selected, the amount of his share of all the fees of counsel employed, retainers to those not required, proportion of damages, travelling expenses, stamp-duties, and, in short, such a phalanx of abominations as no man ever saw or dreamed of in conjunction.

But, appalling as was this perilous account, and important as the result of Jack's earnest request to be furnished with it, because he always preferred paying ready money, it was "a mere flea-bite" to what was at hand.

Jack had again put "Psyche" under Lady Lavinia's orders, and announced his intention of being of the party himself,—had, according to Bung's advice, fixed one, for the hour of starting, and settled Southampton as the place of destination—issued his instructions to Hickman to prepare an extra fine luncheon, in order to get into the good graces of Mrs. Peckover, who it was clear had very considerable influence over Lady Lavinia,—and had just finished his toilet for the morning, when Hickman again made his appearance with a letter from Lord Wagley. Jack, finding it heavy, was quite divided be-

tween the pleasure of receiving a communication from his lordship, and the apprehension that it might contain the dreaded report of the trial.

“ Any answer wanted ?” said Jack.

“ No, sir,” said Hickman,—not quite so respectfully as he might have answered, if he had not listened at the drawing-room door the night before.

Jack proceeded to open the letter, and read thus :

“ SIR,—Some mistake having occurred in the direction of the enclosed letter, it has been returned to me from the general post-office, and I very much regret having been obliged to open it, in order to ascertain its owner ; and still more, that, as it had no signature appended to it, I have been compelled to read a great part of it, in order to discover by whom it was written. I am, sir, Your obedient servant,

“ WAGLEY.”

With this, as the reader must anticipate, came back Jack’s confidential letter to his mother, which, if his vanity had not as usual interposed itself, would have been properly ad-

dressed and punctually delivered; but which now had necessarily undergone a perusal in order that it might be sent to the place from whence it came.

Jack looked at it—held it up—opened it, and began to re-read it—in hopes that it might not be so thoroughly explanatory of his intentions, and so totally destructive of his schemes, as at the first blush he apprehended, but as he proceeded line by line to retrace its contents, it was all too true—every project was there related, every subject touched upon, and all his artful contrivances exhibited at full length. He saw in the pages of this dreadful epistle the death-warrant of all his hopes, unless Lord Wagley's sense of honour was such as to seal his lips with regard to intelligence accidentally, or rather incidentally, obtained from a confidential letter addressed to another person.

It is probable that Lord Wagley, however he might have considered it prudent or necessary to regulate his own future conduct towards Jack, would not have betrayed his secrets had not another letter reached him the same morning from Lord Tom Towzle, which

contained a regular detail of Jack's proceedings during the last few weeks of his lordship's association with him.

Jack was certainly staggered. The first blow that Gully gave Gregson in their memorable fight near Dunstable, was not a greater puzzler. He resolved to put the whole case at issue at once ; and brushing up his hair, and pulling up his shirt collars, he put his hat on his head slantingly, and, arming himself with his little switch, proceeded in less than an hour, and without answering Lord Wagley's note, to Lady Lavinia's cottage.

When he arrived within eye-shot of the little lawn, he perceived Selwyn and Fanny sitting together on the bench placed, as the reader remembers, just outside the door : this looked badly for his plans of acidulating "granny ;" and therefore he resolved to appear particularly pleased at the sight. But, whatever his intentions might have been with regard to his conduct upon the occasion, they were completely, and by no means agreeably, frustrated by the sudden start-up of the lovers from their delicious *tête-à-tête*, their sudden rush into the

cottage, and an equally sudden closing of the door.

Jack “didn’t like the look of things by no means;” however, he continued his march “straight up, right down, and no mistake,” to the gate—that gate which erst stood open to invite him in; it was locked: he pulled the bell; the pet livery-servant of Lady Lavinia, the civillest creature in the world, who ran about Cowes with *billets doux*, and all sorts of messages, after Jack’s heels, came to the barrier.

“My lady nearly ready?” said Jack, settling his collars.

“My lady is not at home,” said the lacquey, with a look black as thunder, and as impudent as he could possibly make it.

“What!” said Jack, “is she gone on board?”

“No; *she*, as you call my lady, is not gone on board,” said the man; “and her ladyship is not going—and more than that, her ladyship has desired me to tell you, she shall not be at home till the end of next December.” Saying which, the man left the gate and the enquirer,

who in casting a glance towards the drawing-room, in which were deposited the light-horse volunteer in the ebony case, and the family-tree of all the Newbiggens of Bumblesford, he saw, scarce hidden by the muslin blinds, Lady Lavinia, Mrs. Peckover, Captain and Mrs. Wilford, and Selwyn and Fanny Hastings, all laughing most unceremoniously.

This *was* a coup,—where was he to go?—what should he do?—send a message to Lord Wagley?—ridiculous!—see him he might—remonstrate with him he would—hear what he had to say—that was the plan: and accordingly, going at a pace something between a walk and a run, Jack retraced his steps towards the Parade, when, just as he reached the high ground at the back of the Castle, he beheld, to his infinite amazement, his beautiful Psyche sailing majestically from her moorings, with the Royal Squadron burgee fluttering at her top-mast head, and a St. George's ensign flying at her gaff.

This most certainly surprised him, who on the instant began to flatter himself that, as a

set-off for his other discomfitures, arising he now could scarcely guess how, he might have been elected into the club: and yet — what *could* it mean? A few minutes discovered the whole truth.

“Well, Mr. Brag,” said Peckover, whom he encountered just at the corner; “this is a bad business—I’m deuced sorry for it, but Mrs. Peckover tells me that I ought to horsewhip you.”

“Sir!” said Jack.

“She does, by jingo,” said the squire; “she says you are a bad ’un—but I don’t trouble my head with those sort of things, ha, ha, ha! Only if you *will* go about talking of ladies of character and reputation as you *do*, and swearing that they are all in love with you, and all ready to throw themselves into your arms, Mrs. Peckover says, she thinks it very probable you’ll very soon get every bone in your little body broken to a smash,—ha, ha, ha!”

“This,” said Jack, “is uncommon queer language, Mr. P., and no mistake.”

“Never mind about that,” said Peckover.

“I have only told you what Mrs. Peckover tells me.—Now hear the message I have to deliver from Lord Wagley: he says, he finds you wish to sell your yacht; so, under those circumstances, he has desired me to hand you back your acceptance for the eight hundred sovereigns, which I have got here; and as Captain Chipstead disapproves of the sale, he has taken possession of her, and she is gone to Portsmouth to bring over Lord Tom Towzle, who had got Chipstead’s promise to have her.”

“But,” said Jack, “she is *my* yacht.”

“Come, come,” said Peckover, “take it easy, as Mrs. Peckover says; “never make quarrels without cause. Here’s your bill, there’s the yacht; Wagley will pay the men’s wages, just as if Chipstead had never sold her, so make the best of the bargain; and, if you follow the advice Mrs. Peckover desired me to give you, you’ll what I call cut and run,—ha, ha, ha!”

“But Lady Lavinia?” said Jack.

“Has shut her doors against you for ever,” said Peckover. “Mrs. Peckover tells me the reason is, that she is furious about your plan of

irritating her against her favourite niece, and delighted with the honourable conduct of young Selwyn in refusing to take your advice. She has given her consent to their marriage, and, as Mrs. Peckover tells me, gives them up a clear thousand a-year of her own jointure for their establishment."

"Well," said Jack, "that's a floorer, and no mistake — what's to be done?"

"Go!" said Peckover, "that's the scheme; as the woman in Shakspeare, that Mrs. P. reads to me sometimes, says,

"Stand not upon the order of going, but go."

"Go!" said Jack; "but it's no go."

"You lose nothing by the yacht," said Peckover, "and that's something,—for Mrs. Peckover has heard that she isn't worth half the money you gave for her. I never trouble my head with those things, ha, ha, ha! However, I can't stay, because I promised Mrs. P. to be back to luncheon; so here, take your bill, and all will be right."

"Yes," said Jack, twiddling the invaluable document in his hands; "but I can't go, and no mistake, this time."

“ Well,” said Peckover, “ I bear no malice ; you have jumped high, and must put up with a tumble. I ’ll shake hands with you for old sporting’s sake, only don’t let Mrs. P. know it. I ’ll settle all the rest with Wagley, and you’ll hear no more about “ Psyche.” Every man has his rubs in this world,—not that I trouble my head with such matters, ha, ha, ha !”

And so the friends parted. Jack proceeded to his lodgings, enquired for Hickman, — a separation from whom he somehow dreaded ; the sneering impertinence of Lady Lavinia’s livery-servant had prepared him for a most tremendous display of insolence from his own man. But here his apprehensions were groundless ; for Lord Wagley himself, having taken the yacht over to fetch Lord Tom, had, without thinking of announcing any change in the state of Brag’s affairs, taken Hickman and the luncheon as he found them on board, all ready prepared,— a circumstance of which Jack most cunningly availed himself : and having paid the amount of his lodging-rent, and told the landlady that he was going over to Ryde, in order personally to circulate his invitations to the ball

he was about to give, he sent for a chaise from "The Fountain," and proceeded *viâ* Newport to that place; having the satisfaction during his *trajet* to perceive his late "tall bark" gracefully cutting through the bright waters, seemingly eager to be freighted with his bitterest enemies.

When he reached the cockney watering-place, conscious of the presence of people there whom he much dreaded to see, he was driven to "The Pier Hotel," where he remained during the evening closely ensconced; and at nine o'clock on the following morning crossed to the "Quebec Tavern," at Portsmouth, where he embarked in "The Rocket" coach for London, having, after all his precautions, encountered on the Pier at Ryde, as he was following the wheelbarrow which contained his trunk and bag, the Lydiards and Rushtons taking their morning walk. He did not *see* them; but, although he averted his head, he could not shut his ears to the undisguised titterings in which they indulged as he passed them.

Upon Jack's arrival in London, he felt that the game was so completely up, and he him-

self so completely down, that any attempt to rally, or restore himself to the place which he had struggled so long to maintain, would be wholly unavailing; and therefore betaking himself in a hack-cab, in company with his one trunk and carpet-bag, to his lodging at Kennington, he set himself down to consider what course it was best to pursue.

His first impulse was to go off and visit his mother, but in what character, puzzled him most. Was she more likely to contribute to assist him if he still appeared the prosperous gentleman on the eve of marrying a Lady Lavinia?—or would her maternal heart more affectionately melt if he told her the truth, and confessed the ruin of his fortunes?

In either case Jack felt something like a security that she would not be unassailable by his persuasion, or deaf to his claims; it was as to the game to be played with Mr. Salmon that our hero was chiefly solicitous. His acceptance for five hundred pounds had that day, of course, been dishonoured; because, although he had still three hundred in his banker's hands, he knew that the firm knew enough of *him* not

to maintain his credit at the expense of even so small a sum as the other two, which were essential to the payment of his bill. If he were to see Salmon so immediately after this event, in his fallen state, Salmon's indignation would no doubt outweigh his compassion; if he flourished off for a day or two longer, upon the higher scale, he might contrive to induce him into some arrangement for the renewal of the bill, or even into some fresh advance upon the faith of his proposed union with the jointured widow: therefore, in the end, Jack determined to let matters rest till the morning, and then, having called on his banker, and drawn a cheque for present use in the gay line, outmanœuvre Salmon, win his mother's support, and start in some new sphere, in which his sharpness might be available.

These matters settled in his mind, Jack proceeded to eat, with no great appetite, a portion of a cold shoulder of roasted mutton which his landlady had two days before dressed for her husband's dinner, and which, seeing Jack out of spirits, she had brought him up for supper, with

a few pickled onions of her own contrivance. This banquet, served by the light of two candles, of which Jack felt scientifically the meanest possible opinion, certainly did afford a very striking contrast to the gaiety and comfort of his late yacht and her laughing passengers. As he drank from a battered pewter-pot the "heavy wet" of Whitbread and Co. he could not banish from his memory, or even from his sight, the odious Dr. Munx swallowing glass after glass of his champagne ; nor, while munching part of a loaf of three days' standing, reflect without horror upon the consumption of pine-apples on board "The Psyche."

It is quite true that Jack was not absolutely reduced as yet to the necessity of partaking of such poor food, or imbibing such coarse beverage ; but he felt a necessity for rest, and even concealment, until his line was taken ; and "dead beat," as he himself would have said, crawled to his kennel, and felt neither courage nor inclination to leave it. To his landlady this change was not so perceptible as it would have been to those who had been accus-

tomed to see him in "the world." While at his "little place in Surrey," he had always kept himself within bounds; and the carpenter and his wife were both perfectly satisfied with their lodger, and never even guessed at the extent of his vagaries at what he elegantly called "The West-end."

The morning came, and with it the necessity for action. He had determined to continue his bright career for a day or two at least, as far as his mother and father-in-law were concerned: after that period, the numerous interesting enquiries which would undoubtedly be made about him by the Cowes tradesmen, Hickman, and all the rest of the Vectans, would render a retreat necessary; not but that, upon the whole, he thought the arrangement about the yacht was a good one,—as it *was* to go, it was best as it was; and then for the smaller bills, if his mother was good-natured, why, he would pay them,—for in money matters there really was no bad principle about Jack; and in the affair of the five-hundred-pound bill, which he had not paid, it was given more because he felt he

had actually a claim to what he required, out of the business, and that Salmon was assuming rather too much in the direction of the financial department of the establishment.

At about twelve o'clock, then, Jack issued forth from his "little place," and calling a hackney-coach from the stand at Kennington-Cross, stepped into it, and directed the man to drive him to his bankers'. The man, of course, obeyed, and Jack entered the shop;—was received, as usual, by one of the partners, with great civility,—talked of the weather, of Cowes, of the Yacht-Club, of Wagley, and everybody else as usual,—till, by way of varying the conversation, he asked for a cheque, and drew thereupon for one hundred pounds: this he tossed down on the counter with one of his most graceful movements, saying loud enough to astonish a butcher's-boy and a maid-servant who were respectively getting three pound ten, and two pound five, from the cashier, "I'll take one fifty, four tens, and ten sovereigns."

The cashier looked at the cheque,—then fumbled in a drawer,—then carried it to a

gentleman with a pen behind his ear, who was standing at a desk in a corner; *he* took it from him, and walked off with it and a parchment-covered book into the parlour, and the cashier began to read another cheque and prepare to pay it.

“ Well,” said Jack, “ where’s the money ?”

“ Would you just step into the parlour, sir ? said the cashier.”

“ Parlour !” said Jack ; “ eh ? — I—I don’t know.”

“ Mr. Brag !” said the partner, coming forward and indicating a desire for a parley. Jack obeyed the call, and left the counter,—a movement followed by a strange look interchanged between the cashier and the clerk next him, which being truly interpreted by the butcher’s boy, and the maid-servant, caused the former to put his finger to his nose, and the latter to burst out laughing, the one having been most unceremoniously shoved out of his turn, and the other most engagingly looked at by Jack, when he was presenting his draft in all the ecstasy of swagger.

“ We have no money of yours in our hands,”

said the partner to Brag ; “ and you know our rule upon that point.”

“ No money of mine !” said Brag ; “ why, you have three hundred pounds of mine paid in to my account by Mr. Salmon, and you acknowledged the receipt—sent me word to say so, all straight up, right down, and no mistake !”

“ So we had,” said the partner, “ till yesterday ; but we yesterday paid your acceptance for five hundred, in favour of Mr. Salmon himself.”

“ Paid it !” said Brag, “ the deuce you did ! What ! advanced two hundred on my account ?”

“ No ;” said the partner, “ you had five hundred pounds here to your credit, and of course the bill was paid.”

“ I, five hundred !” said Jack ; “ why, when was the other two paid in ?”

“ Yesterday morning, I think,” said the partner, “ Mr. Jiggins, just turn to Mr. Brag’s account.”

Jiggins did turn to the account, and yesterday morning it was.

The reader, perhaps, is at this moment as

little aware of the real nature of this proceeding as Jack himself was ; but when he comes to be enlightened, he will have, perhaps, a higher opinion of Mr. Salmon's intellectuality than he previously had. The truth is, that Salmon had not paid away Jack's bill ; but on the morning it became due,—the morning preceding the day of which we now treat,—Mr. Salmon, having duly endorsed the said bill, sent a friend to the bankers' to present it ; it was dishonoured, as he anticipated, they not having assets to pay it.

The moment Salmon gets this intelligence, he proceeds to the banking-house, in great agitation, and states his surprise at such a "return," as he himself had paid in three hundred very recently to Mr. Brag's account.

"Very true," said the partner to Salmon, "and *that* he has not drawn upon ; but, Mr. Salmon, you know our rule."

Salmon *did* know their rule, and that knowledge had induced him, as we know, to have another banker. However, Jem had done all he wanted, he had ascertained that his worthy

son-in-law and senior had left the three hundred untouched ; whereupon, somewhere about one o'clock, he sends a friend,—not the man who had presented the bill, but another,—and through *him* pays in two hundred pounds to Jack's account ; having done this, his former friend "calls again" before five, at the banking-house with the five-hundred-pound acceptance, to hear if there is any better news for him, and, Jack's account now being adequate to the demand, the bill is paid. Salmon, by this manœuvre gets back the three hundred pounds he had advanced to Jack, and the additional two, which he had so recently paid in, leaving to the honour, if not profit, of poor Brag, the five-hundred-pound bill, duly paid and "released."

This was a *coup* for which Jack certainly was not prepared—it destroyed his last hope : fifteen shillings and ninepence halfpenny was now the amount of his ready money. Could he continue, under such circumstances, even for a day, to ride the high horse with Salmon ; it *was* a question ; and the more he thought over the matter, the more he considered the

fact that Salmon had not only saved *his* credit at the banker's, but got back his own money, the more he encouraged the hope that he might be inclined to put faith in the representations which he proposed to make with regard to his affairs; all depending upon their being made off hand, straight up, right down, and no mistake.

Jack, mystified as he was at the time, proceeded to his door-plate in Grosvenor-street, where the master of the house, whose "lady" occupied the lower part of it as a milliner, was greatly pleased to see him once again, and in the plenitude of his happiness informed him that several persons from the Isle of Wight had called to enquire for him that morning, and that two of them said they would call again in the evening. This intelligence, if not altogether pleasant, was at all events seasonable; since, as the next day was Sunday, if Jack could contrive to avoid these "obliging enquirers" till after midnight, he might have a day to himself in which to make some sort of arrangement.

Jack prudently resolved to house himself until the shades of evening might render his wanderings secure, and then to betake himself to the shop, find Salmon, and manage him as he best could, according to circumstances. Where he concealed himself is no matter of importance to us ; but about nine o'clock, when the natural darkness of the evening, greatly improved by the tinting of a metropolitan atmosphere, seemed apt and fitting for his purpose, he bent his steps towards the well-known home of his fathers ; having arrived at which, he found, contrary to the custom of other times, that, although it was Saturday night, the shop closed, the shutters hermetically sealed, and the whole lower part of the house enveloped in Cimmerian darkness : not so, however, the drawing-room floor ; there, although the blinds were down, blazed a brilliant light ; and as he paused under the windows, Jack thought he heard singing, and was sure he heard laughter loud and long. He knocked at the door ; it was opened by an old servant who as yet had not received her discharge.

“ Ah, Margery !” said Jack, “ how are you ? alive and merry still ?—Salmon at home ?—how’s mother ?”

“ Mr. Salmon is at home, Master John,” said the old woman, “ as you may hear ; missus is out at the lodgings.”

“ Is there any company here ?” said Jack.”

“ I believe there is, too,” said Margery.

“ Well,” said Jack, “ take up my name—eh ?—I’ll go and have a look at ’em ; straight up, right down, and no mistake !”

“ Take up your name in your own house !” said Margery ; “ if your name goes up, you’ll see none o’ the fun, depend upon it ; go yourself into the drawing-room—who has so good a reason ?—and then you’ll see what’s what, and then I hope my poor missus will know of the goings on.”

“ Gad, I believe you are right,” said Jack ; “ so I will :” to which resolution Jack instantly screwed himself, because he thought that by catching Salmon out, as he called it, in his dissipation, he might threaten him into compliance with his demands, and accordingly

up he went ; the old woman standing in the passage rubbing her hands for joy, and chuckling aloud as she mumbled the words, " That 's just what I wanted."

Jack went through the masonic ceremony of knocking at the door ; but the joyous " Come in !" of the master of the house so speedily followed the " tap," that in another second Jack stood in the midst of the astonished assembly. Banquo's arrival at Lady Macbeth's party, could not have been more unexpected or unwelcome ; a dead silence followed his appearance ; and Salmon, involuntarily getting up from his seat, muttered a word or two.

" I hope," said Jack, " I don't intrude, as the man says in the play."

" Not in the least," said Salmon. " Glad to see you. Won't you take a chair?—Thought you were at Cowes,—twig?"

" Where 's mother?" said Jack.

" At the willa," said Salmon. " She can't stand London air, so——"

Here some of the party coughed, and some tittered ; and Miss Hogg, who was seated on

Salmon's left hand, leaned across him to her ma', who was placed on his right, to announce her recognition of "the fool of a son of the Widow Waddle," whom she had denounced to his face at Lewes. Two slang-looking men graced the board, between whom was placed Mrs. Cropper,—Mrs. Dallington's housekeeper, —of whom the reader has heard before; and, to crown all, acting as croupier to Jim Salmon, was installed, with a group of jugs and bottles before him, the confidential minister of Colonel Stiffkey, who had taken so active a part in the manufacture of Sir Stumpy Dubbs's particular punch on the evening, at Eastbourne, when Jack had lost the money at *Ecarté* which he had not paid.

The moment Jack glanced his eye round the room, saw the profusion of fruits, and wines, and everything else of the best sort, with which the table was covered, and beheld the guests considerably elevated by their libations, of whom the faces of two or three were fatally familiar to his eye, he stammered something, retreated towards the door, and,

making one of his "slap-up" bows, told Salmon he would call on him in the morning; and quitted the room without making any further observation, or taking the least notice of anybody who was in it.

As he skipped down the stairs, a shout of laughter from the assembled guests rang in his ears; and without stopping to see old Margery, or to have the door opened for him, he quitted the house, called a hackney-coach, and with a stock of ready money reduced to less than thirteen shillings and four-pence,—a sum never to be forgotten by *him* after reading Leveret's bill,—he told the coachman to drive him to No. 72, Elysium Row, Pentonville.

Jack, as we have seen, was a foolish, vain, conceited fellow; and, in supporting a system of absurd pretensions, was betrayed, not only into equivocations and evasions, but even into falsehood: yet, mean and contemptible as he might have been, he was not quite insensible to the feelings of humanity. The flushed countenances of the maudlin revellers in the room which he had been accustomed only on Sundays to see

occupied by his parents and his lost sister, at a time when the proceedings of the family were regulated by religion and honesty,—the fumes of the wine,—the gaudy display of luxuries hitherto strangers to that board,—the sounds of mirth and gaiety ringing in his ears,—and *she*, who had for years been mistress of the house, from whose property the means to furnish out the feast were derived,—absent—exiled—neglected!—the voice of nature was heard in the midst of all the clamour, and Jack felt filially angry as he entered his neglected parent's lonesome lodging.

He found her on the point of retiring to rest, sitting in an arm-chair, sipping a nearly finished glass of “something warm,” with one candle burning on the table, and a little girl—her landlady's daughter—reading, or rather spelling, to her the “Daily Advertiser,” borrowed from some neighbouring ale-house. At her feet lay a cat watching her attentively, in hopes to get a crumb of the dry bread upon which the poor old lady was supping. The place was still, and the silence unbroken, except by the parasitical purring of Puss, the ticking of a clock in the

corner of the room, or the occasional shrill cry of "Beer" from a peripatetic pot-boy in the road.

"Johnny, my boy," said she, as Jack entered the apartment, "this is good of you,—kind of you. I didn't expect to see you for many days to come. Sit down. Nelly dear, get another candle. What will you have?—something to eat? Get some hot water in the kettle, dear. God bless you, Johnny, for coming to see me; for I have been very bad since I wrote to you Monday. I thought, somehow, you would not be long either, because you never answered my letter; and poor Jemes was very anxious to know about those people I wrote about."

"Jemes be ——" Jack stopped himself. "My poor mother, you *do* look ill; but—I don't want anything to eat;—no, no; let the little girl go down. I only want to talk to *you*."

"Go dear," said Mrs. Salmon. "I'll ring for you if I want you. I should have been in bed in half an hour. Jemes bids me never sit up for him after half-past ten; and on Saturdays he has so much to do."

"Do!" said Jack. "He's—— Never mind,

mother. He is a bad one,—a right regular bad one, and no mistake. He has nothing to do ; but—no, I'll not worry you about *that* ; time enough, mother. Mother, I'm ruined ! that's the long and the short of it ; and, as I believe, we are all ruined."

"Ruined, Johnny !" said Mrs. Salmon. "How—?"

"I can't tell you all," said Jack. "Things have turned out bad. Salmon has behaved ill to me, and——"

"He thinks you have behaved ill to *him*," said Mrs. Salmon ; "and spoke very much about the bill last night when he was here."

"Never mind," said Jack. "He has the right on his side. I have no pull upon him. Father having left you the whole business, it is now all his ; and I'm regularly floored."

"My poor boy, John ! don't say so," said Mrs. Salmon ; and the tears ran down her cheeks as she looked at her son, and held his hand affectionately between hers.

"It's a long story, mother," said he, "and I have no time to tell it. I know I might, after what

has happened, as well try to get honey out of a flint-stone as anything like help from Jem. All that's my own fault. I have played a fool's game, and must pay for losing. To-morrow is Sunday, and to-morrow I am safe; but after that I must go,—bolt,—and I haven't a single sovereign in the world. Nor am I likely to get one?"

"Always, always," said the poor old lady, bursting into a flood of grief, and catching the crest-fallen pretender to her heart, "while I have one to give you."

"God help us! mother," said Jack. "Neither you nor I know how long that may be."

"Where are you going, John, my boy,—my poor boy?—Where are you going?" said Mrs. Salmon.

"Ah!" said Jack, "that, mother, is more than I can tell. Somewhere it must be,—and that immediately."

"John," said Mrs. Salmon, wiping away her tears,—“John, hand me that box,—that brown box: just look under the paper there, I think you'll find my keys. Ah! there,—there they

are ! Give it me ;—thank God for this. Oh ! my poor John,” continued she, while searching for the particular key wherewith to open the box ; “if you had but have minded what I kept saying, this would not have happened. If you hadn’t persuaded me to change my name, there would have been the business and ——”

“ —— Don’t, mother,” said Jack,—“ don’t rake up old grievances. I know it,—I see it now it is too late. I am a fool,—a beast !”

“ Bless your heart ! my poor boy,” said his mother, “ don’t talk so ;—we are all of us weak, blind creatures ; don’t. Keep up your heart, John ; only tell me, my child, that you have done nothing wrong to be obliged to go away ?”

“ No,” said Jack,—“ debt, mother ; — that ’s all.”

“ Thank God for that !” said Mrs. Salmon. “ I wish I could say so of my poor Kate. However, we must look to the present. Here, John, are fifteen pounds. Jemes is very careful and doesn’t allow me much for expenses : but this I have saved up to buy myself a few little things I shall want for the winter. I don’t like to be always asking him for money ; it

puts him out of humour. Here, take them, my Johnny, and I'll contrive to do without what I want."

"Mother, mother!" said Jack, "I don't deserve this. I won't have it:—no, no. Give me five,—that's all. Some of the best men amongst us have started with a tenth part as much. I have to begin life again,—you shall keep the rest, mother."

"If you don't take it, John," said his mother, "I'll send it after you to-morrow."

"Where?" said Jack. "Where shall I be to-morrow?—where the next day? No, no, you shall hear from me. It is all of no use my keeping you up, to hear my story now. I'll write to you all about it, and how I have fallen into this scrape. Nay, I would come to you to-morrow, if I thought you would be alone."

"I'm sure to be alone," said the old lady; "for Jemes told me, if he did not come home this evening he shouldn't be back till Monday."

"Then, mother, expect me here to-morrow," said Jack. "I'll settle my plans to-night; and the last hours I spend in London shall be with *you*."

“ Bless you, John ! bless you, my poor child ! ” said his fond parent ; and again giving him a cordial embrace, they parted.

And what do this meeting and this parting show ? In the days of his assumption she admonished him,—in the time of his pride she rebuked him, —in the career of his folly she laughed at him ; but, neglected and despised as she had been by him, when he comes to her in the day of defeat and in the hour of distress, she clasps him to the bosom which first nurtured him ; sacrifices her own comforts to his necessities ; and, with all her little imperfections on her head, proves herself the sweetest and tenderest of all God’s noble works,—a MOTHER.

Jack was however unable to fulfil his promise of visiting, or even writing to her. He returned late to his lodgings ; and in the morning, having told his landlord that he was obliged to give up the rooms, the man saw so great a change in his manner, that he became apprehensive that something was preying upon his mind, which might induce serious consequences ; and having received the amount of his bill, and consulted with his wife, with whom Jack con-

sidered himself an uncommon favourite, and no mistake, he plainly told him what he thought. Jack, who saw that the very last feather of the peacock had now dropped from the daw's tail, and that a sincere friend, however humble his station, was what was most essential to him at the moment, admitted the fact of his involvement, and with equal sincerity avowed his inability to discover at the moment any means of extrication.

"Have you a mind," said the carpenter, "to go to Spain?"

"Spain!" said Jack; "what! to fight?"

"No," said the carpenter, "not exactly. Do you know what a Commissary is?"

"Can't say I do," said Jack.

"Why," said the carpenter, "he has to get bread and meat, and other things of that sort for the army; I have a cousin going off to-morrow in the steamer, who *is* one; and my wife and I are going down to Poplar to dine with him. I know they have room for three or four more, — good pay, — not ready money down, to be sure, but in uncommon good bills on an old established firm in Aldgate,—a very

smart uniform and a very snug berth. I'm sure I could get you *that*."

"But," said Jack, "I don't know how to get bread and bullocks."

"Oh," said the carpenter, "they tell *me* that the office will be quite a sinecure; I think it's a fair prospect; we all three can go down in my chay-cart and settle the thing at once, for my cousin Bill is high up in the service."

Jack paused a little, — the struggle was a severe, but a short one;—at all events, the acceptance of the offer would get him free of expense out of the way of his creditors; and if they would allow him to change his name,—which the carpenter said he knew they would, inasmuch as his cousin Bill Nibbs, had done the same thing,—he would go: and accordingly, the next day, Sunday, the 23rd of August, redoubtable Jack, with the carpenter and the carpenter's wife, drove in the chay-cart to Poplar, where they met their relation; and, before ten o'clock the next morning Jack was steaming down the river on his way to Falmouth, under the name, style, and title of acting-assistant-deputy - deputy - assistant commissary-

general Templegrove, in the service of Her Catholic Majesty.

Nothing has been heard publicly of the acting-assistant-deputy-deputy - assistant - commissary-general since his departure. His mother has received a letter or two from him, the contents of which have not transpired.

Mr. James Salmon early in the month of November, was run away with, by his spirited horse, thrown out of his gig, coming down the hill from Hampstead, where he had been taking a *tête-à-tête* mutton chop with Miss Roseville, at Jack Straw's Castle; and falling with his head upon a flint stone, was unfortunately killed upon the spot. His fair companion escaped with only a slight bruise or two, and having been put into an omnibus, arrived in time at the theatre, where she acted with unqualified applause the Widow Cheerly, in which character she introduced her popular ballad,

"I'm a poor country maid that's for sartain;" and concluded the evening's entertainments with "The Actress of all Work."

The widow Salmon, in consequence of her

young husband's death, is comfortably re-established in her shop, and has written to her son to come and take the command of his own forces in London: so that those who have laughed at his follies and vanities, and who have felt for the misfortunes of his kind-hearted parent, during his feverish and ill-judged career, may yet hope to see him respectably settled in trade, the sterling characteristic of our blessed country, in the pursuit and prosperity of which, every true-born Englishman must glory.

THE END.

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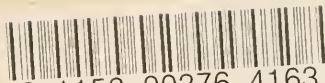
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